

T H E
Faith of GOD's Elect;
O R, T H E
L I F E of J E S U S
M A N I F E S T in his S A I N T S.

B E I N G,
A mature EXAMINATION of the
QUESTION, (and of a PAMPHLET,
entituled, The QUESTION ANSWERED)
Whether SAVING FAITH in CHRIST,
is a Duty required by the moral Law, of
all THOSE who live under the Gospel
Revelation?

C O N T A I N I N G,

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FOR BY GRACE ARE YE SAVED. Ephes. ii. 8.

By JOHN JOHNSON, *R*

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T H E
P R E F A C E.

T O T H E
L I T T L E F L O C K

Under my PASTORAL CARE.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN,

GRACE be unto you, and Peace from God our Father, and the Lord *Jesus Christ*.---I have no greater Joy than to hear *and see* that my Children walk in the Truth.---For God is my Record, how greatly I long after you all in the Bowels of *Jesus Christ*.---That your Hearts might be comforted, being knit together in Love, and unto all Riches of the full Assurance of Understanding, to the Acknowledgment of the Mystery of God, and of the Father, and of *Christ*; in whom are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge. And this I say, lest any Man should beguile you with enticing Words. *For it is the Joy of my Soul to behold* your Order, and the Stedfastness of your Faith in *Christ*. As ye have therefore received *Christ Jesus* the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and
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built up in him, and stablished in the Faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with Thanksgiving. Beware lest any Man spoil you through Philosophy and vain Deceit, after the Tradition of Men, after the Rudiments of the World, and not after *Christ*: For in him dwelleth all the Fulness of the Godhead bodily. And *all the Saints* are complete in him, which is the Head of all Principality and Power.

FOR this Cause I bow my Knees unto the Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, of whom the whole Family in Heaven and Earth is named. That he would grant you according to the Riches of his Glory, to be strengthened with Might, by his Spirit in the Inner-man; that *Christ* may dwell in your Hearts by Faith; that ye being rooted and grounded in Love, may be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the Breadth, and Length, and Depth, and Height; and to know the Love of *Christ*, which passeth Knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the Fulness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the Power that worketh in us, unto him be Glory in the Church throughout all Ages, World without End. *Amen.*

My dear Brethren, The ultimate End of a Christian's Life, and Profession, is the Glory of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. But none can bring Glory to the Sacred Three-One, without Holiness of Conversation.: And none are capable of true Holiness of Life, but such as are blessed with an internal Conformity to God's Holy One: And none can be made conformable
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to the blessed Son of God, but by a vital Communication of divine Grace to their Souls: And there is no Way (known to us) whereby the Soul can receive of *Christ's* spiritual Fulness, but thro' the Understanding. *How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? ---- So then, Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.----As new-born Babies, desire the sincere Milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby.---And this is Life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* The precious Doctrine of the Gospel of *Christ*, under the Efficacy of the Spirit of Holiness, reveals the Love of God in our Hearts: The Manifestation of the Love of God, causeth us to love him, *because he first loved us.* And if this Love prevail in our Souls, it will constrain us to live to the Glory of him that called us. Every Soul that knows what it is to live unto God, knows also how his Mind was brought into such a Disposition, and that (notwithstanding the Usefulness of Admonitions and Exhortations, in their proper Place) his Heart was not blessed with a Spirit of Sanctification, by Commands or Threatenings, or being call'd upon, and told, He ought, he should, he must do so, or so. But by the pure Doctrine of Grace dropping into the Heart, *like heavenly Dew*, 'till it produced Vivification in the Affections, and caused the Soul to bud in heavenly Desires, to blossom in a humble Waiting upon God, and to bring forth the Fruit of a Holy Life.

Therefore, according to the small Measure of Light which the Lord hath given me; from the first Day I came among you, I have endeavoured
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to hold forth *the Word of Life*; and to make known *the Mystery of the Gospel*. I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you; nor skinned to declare unto you all the Counsel of God. I have renounced the hidden Things of Dishonesty, not walking in Craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully, but by Manifestation of the Truth, recommending myself to every Man's Conscience in the Sight of God.

And I am bound to give Thanks to God, and *the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, for you my Brethren, (tho' few, small, and despised) because he has blessed you with a steady Attachment to the glorious Doctrines of the everlasting Gospel of his Son. And hoping the Lord will stablish you to the End, to stand fast in the Lord; to hold that fast which you have, that no Man take your Crown; that you may hold fast his Name, and not deny his Faith: I desire always to study your Edification, to the utmost of my Power; not setting before you the Chaff of human Excellency, but the substantial Bread which came down from Heaven. For I determined not to know any Thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. For if ye be blessed with special Grace from Christ; then ye will assuredly enjoy true Holiness of Heart, Lip, and Life; which the most refined self-righteous Person could never attain, any further than the empty Shew. Wherefore, I think it meet as long as I am in this Tabernacle, to stir you up. That you may be able after my Decease, to have these Things always in Remembrance.

AND now Brethren, since it is the good Pleasure of God, that the true Light of the Gospel should

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should shine in his Church; it is his Will, That we should earnestly contend for the Faith which was once delivered to the Saints: And be valient for the Truth. And surely there is a Cause: When the precious Faith of God's Elect, is depreciated to a dry Creature Duty; and the Glory of the Lord from Heaven, is brought to a Level with the Man of the Earth: by those who pretend to maintain the Doctrines of Sovereign Grace.

I AM not insensible, that there is a *Weed* sprung up in the *Professor's Garden*, (the Bane of true Godliness, and vital Religion) falsely call'd *Charity*: Who shoots up his Branches to such an Height, that *the Cedars in the Garden of God cannot hide him*. Whose Policy, under the painted Appearance of Love, Peace, and Unity; is to root out the true Love of the Saints, the Peace of *Jerusalem*, and the Unity of the Body of *Christ*. For whosoever cannot acknowledge all Professors by the Bulk, as Brethren in *Christ*; whether there be the Appearance of Christianity in Doctrine and Practice, or not; must be branded as an uncharitable Man. Whosoever cannot bear those Doctrines and Practices which are evil, nor strike Hands at all Events, with whosoever shall call themselves Christians; must be charged with opposing the Unity of the Church of God. Whosoever stands up for the Truth of the Gospel of *Jesus Christ*, must be reproached as a Breaker of Peace. And thus the true Charity of *Christ's* Virgin Bride, is degraded, because it refuses to keep Company with that spurious Charity, which (like a Harlot) is common to all.---True Charity proceeds from the Love of God, and is regulated by his Word.

Word. It respects all Mankind, as fellow Creatures; all moral Men, as good Neighbours; and all that bear *Christ's* Image, as Brethren in the Kingdom of God. The Image of a Heathen Philosopher, in a Moralist, is not sufficient to recommend a Person to the Charity of a Christian; as touching brotherly Love in *Christ*. Nor is a bare Assent to revealed Gospel Truths, sufficient to recommend a Person to the Approbation of those who have *learned of the Father, been quickened together with Christ, and anointed with the Holy Ghost*. For Nature, with all it's Advantages, and Improvements, is specifically different from the Life, and Image of *Jesus*, in a Heaven-born Soul. Therefore, true Charity will distinguish it's Objects, so far as the Judgment can extend. It esteems Persons, according as their Profession and Conversation correspond with the revealed Will of God: But does not esteem or disesteem any Branch of Gospel Truth, because it corresponds with, or varies from the Inclinations of Men.---But this delusive Harlot (false Charity) covers her Face with a Vail of pretended *Modesty*, to Men: and under it discovers the greatest *Impudence*, against *Christ*. For under Pretence of keeping Love, Peace, and Unity; and to avoid offending any Person, or raising Disputes in Matters of Religion; Liberty is taken to under-value those precious Doctrines taught by the Son of God. We are told, They are unnecessary; not material Points; not to be insisted on; not to be spoken in Public; better let alone, than offend People, &c. Yea, under the Patronage of this painted Charity, we must be told which of the Doctrines of *Christ* to stand up for; and which to decline, for Fear of disgusting soft Minds: Which

Which to own publickly, and which to smother in private, lest Persons should take Umbrage, &c. As if *Christ* had taught Doctrines not fit to be acknowledged, or vindicated.

But Christ was faithful as a Son over his own House; and taught nothing but what is for Edification: And has no need of a Popish Counsel, to determine what Part of his Word is safe to be taught, and what Part is dangerous. Himself had the Tongue of the Learned, to speak a Word in Season: And knew what to utter, and what to conceal. Christ knew that his own Sheep would hear his Voice: and says, Blessed is he who soever shall not be offended in me. And he knew the Opposition that would arise in carnal Minds, against his Doctrine: Therefore he says, I am come to set Fire on the Earth. I came not to send Peace, but a Sword. He came not to sooth the carnal Mind, but faithfully to declare his Father's Will; against which the carnal Mind is Enmity. The Truth of God is not to be palliated, in order to accommodate it to the Will of Men; but faithfully declared, whatever be the Event. When God sent a Message by the Prophet, his Commission was, Diminish not a Word. Christ's Commission to his Apostles, was, Teaching them to observe all Things whatsoever I have commanded you. The Angel commanded Peter and John to speak to the People, All the Words of this Life: That is, of Christ, the Life of his Church. Therefore, instead of real Modesty, it is the highest Degree of Insolence, to pretend to sort out the Doctrines taught by the King of Glory; and determine which are fit for publick Instruction, and which are not. For thus the Glory of the everlasting Gospel, may be pared away,

away, by little and little. And when we have tamely submitted to those Amputations; they will not answer the proposed End: For the Soul that is born of God, cannot be satisfied without the living Bread: And the carnal Mind will not be content so long as any spiritual Truth remains. For so long as the Enmity remains between the two Seeds, it will be impossible for all the slight Healers, and untempered Daubers, to make these two Parallels meet together. The two Families cannot feed at one Table. Either the Children will cry, because their Bread is taken away, and their Appetites mocked with *Serpent's Dust*: or the Serpent will hiss against the *Bread of Life*. Whatsoever is of the Will, Power, Work, Virtue, Goodness, or Performance of Man, cannot possibly be the Food to a Soul that is made Partaker of the divine Nature. Whatever gives Vigour, Strength, and Comfort to a spiritual Man, is *Jesus Christ*, and him *crucified*: Or the *Fulness of Grace*, from *God the Father*, in the *beloved Son*, by the *Holy Ghost*: Abtracted from all other Things.

BELOVED, the ensuing Treatise, I, in the first Place, present to you; as my nearest Relatives, and they who have the most immediate Right to my Labours. The sole Reason of my publishing it, is to rescue the glorious Doctrines of Divine Grace, from the Mixture of human Performances; that each may appear in it's proper Place. Being well assured, that without distinct and just Conceptions of these Things, you can never attain to a *strong Consolation*; nor can you *serve God acceptably*. For no solid Comfort can possibly arise, from any Thing found in, done by, or produced from
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any Creature : But from *Christ* alone. And as the Riches of the Grace of God is the alone Motive to true Godliness, and sincere Obedience ; so far as your Minds are misguided, to conceive any Thing to be produced from yourselves, which ought to be attributed to divine Grace ; by so much the Grace of God will be diminished in your Eyes : And the strongest Influence to a holy Conversation, will so far be obscured ; and of Consequence, your Obedience will be so much the less ; Or at least, less spiritual.

I HAVE not written, for the Sake of maintaining a meer *logical Point* : But to vindicate the Truth as it is in *Jesus*. Neither from a *Spirit of Contention* ; nor out of Disrespect to any Man : But for the Establishment, and Edification of your Souls. I have indeed, taken into Consideration the Arguments of a certain *Author*, who has made a great Noise in the Country. Not from any Animosity against his Person (whom I never saw) nor from an Apprehension of any Honour it can be to any one, to answer what Arguments he has offered : But that, by comparing what he hath said, with the Oracles of God, I might render the Truth more conspicuous. And because I think the Scope of his Reasoning tends to subvert some of the fundamental Doctrines of the Gospel of *Christ* : For which it is my Duty to contend.

AND now my dear Friends, *Hold fast the faithful Word---that ye may be able by sound Doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the Gain-sayers. --Follow Peace with all Men, and Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord.* But remember,

ber, That whatsoever does not proceed from the Spring of divine Grace, is not worthy the Name of Holiness: And whatsoever hath not Truth for it's Foundation, is not worthy the Name of Peace. Nor is that Peace to be desired, which can only be obtained at the Expence of the Truth of *Christ*, and the Order of God's House. But follow after the Things which make for true Peace. And if it be possible (keeping Conscience void of Offence) live peaceably with all Men. And as you profess to be born of God, Let your Conversation be such as becometh the Gospel of Christ.---Stand fast in one Spirit, with one Mind, striving together for the Faith of the Gospel.---See that ye love one another with a pure Heart fervently.---Live in Peace; and the God of Love and Peace shall be with you.

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Faith of God's Elect, &c.

C H A P. I.

The INTRODUCTION. Shewing the Nature of the Question, and wherein the Controversy consists.

A SENSE of the Divine Being is a Principle in Nature. For however insensible some Persons may be, through Sottishness; whatever others may imagine, through Distraction; or others may presumptuously assert, through Wickedness; there is no such Thing as a living Man in the diligent Exercise of his rational Powers, can be an Atheist in his Judgment. For however Mankind may be depraved, and darkened by Sin; God has fixed in the Conscience such a Sense of his own Existence, as nothing in Earth or Hell can eradicate.

CONSCIOUSNESS of Duty to God, is another Principle in Nature. For whatever Degree of Obduracy may grow upon the Minds of wicked Men; there is no Man in the deliberate Use of his Reason, but must judge himself under an Obligation to the Author of his Being.

BUT the Question is, Wherein does the Obligation consist? And, What is the Duty we owe to our great Creator?

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I ANSWER, All Obligations to Duty, simply considered, are in their own Nature Points of Gratitude; purely arising from Favours bestowed. Therefore, in the Nature of Things, the Obligation must be exactly commensurate to the Benefits received. But the Manner in which Duty is to be performed, can only be understood by the Edict of the Benefactor. And whatever faint Ideas the Reason of Man may form, of the divine Favours bestowed on Creatures; or of the Nature of Good and Evil, as it may be pleasing or displeasing, to a perfect Being; it is impossible for finite and depraved Reason, to be a competent Judge of Things so sublime, without a divine Revelation. And that Revelation, must carry such Demonstration of it's divine Authority, as to convince the Judgment; and bring the humble Soul to an intire Submission to it's Dictation. Not to be tried by the Probate of human Reason; for then it is no divine Revelation to us at all. For though it is necessary that our Understandings should be fully convinced, that such Revelation is from God; yet being convinced of it's Divine Authority, it is highly reasonable we should totally yield our Judgments to it's Decision; as a sovereign Arbitrator in every Thing pertaining to God. And from thence all Cases are to be determined, and all Doubts resolved: both in regard to the Blessings which God has conferr'd on us: and what Returns of Gratitude he requires from us; or in what manner those Favours are to be improved by us.

AND, that the Scripture of the Old and New Testament is attended with such Demonstration, to every humble enquiring Soul; I need not dispute; but take for granted. Being confident
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there is not (nor can be) a Man in *England*, who is willing to bow his Heart to Instruction; but must (in a diligent Perusal thereof) be convinced of it's divine Authority: And that whosoever denies the Authority of that Holy Word; it is not for want of Demonstration in those sacred Writings; but Enmity against the divine Author, which is the sole Cause of his Infidelity. Therefore, though I should always esteem it my Duty to endeavour the Satisfaction of a weak Mind; I should think it a vain Mispend of Time, to dispute with a presumptuous Deist (*a*).

To this perfect System of divine Truth, we are to have Recourse, in all Things relating to the Kingdom of God: To submit our Judgment to the Decision of this unerring Word: And to determine all Points respecting Faith or Practice, by this infallible Rule (*b*).-----Wherein we find three Things clearly stated, and largely demonstrated. 1. The rich Blessings bestowed upon Mankind in his Creation: And the Obedience required of him by his Creator; as a grateful Return for, a due Improvement of, and the Tenure whereby he was to hold the Enjoyment of those Benefits: With his Apostatizing from his Allegiance to his sovereign Lord; and his miserable Ejection from his Enjoyments. 2. The general providential Blessings which God (in Consideration of a promised Messiah) was pleased still to continue to Mankind: And the Obedience which God requires in Consequence of the Continuance of those forfeited Privileges: And how ungrateful Mankind still proves, in despising the Riches of the Goodness, Forbearance, and Long-suffer-

(*a*) 2 *Pet.* iii. 5.

(*b*) *Isa.* viii. 20.

ing of God. 3. The spiritual and eternal Blessings of Grace and Glory, freely given to God's Elect in *Christ Jesus*: With that Gratitude and Obedience to their heavenly Father, which is incumbent on them, in Consequence of their being made Partakers of the boundless Grace, and unsearchable Riches of *Christ*.---Which Blessings bestowed, and the Duties thereupon required; it highly concerns us to know, and duly to distinguish: That God may receive due Praise and Glory; and we may render due Thanksgiving and Obedience. For, inasmuch as Benefits bestowed, and Duties required, are exactly proportionate to each other; they cannot possibly be separated; nor can one be extended beyond the Dimensions of the other: But every Favour bestowed, naturally becomes an Obligation upon the Receiver; and every Injunction, necessarily supposes that some Favour has been, or is bestowed, adequate to the Duty required. For God is a God of Equity. Therefore, nothing can be sufficient to excuse us from a diligent Search into the Goodness of God; that we may know the Things freely given us: And into the Will of God; that we may know the Things required of us. Which is the Subject of my present Enquiry.

A PAMPHLET was lately put into my Hand, entituled, " The Question answered, Whether " Saving Faith in *Christ*, is a Duty required by " the moral Law, of all those who live under " the Gospel Revelation."

To this Question, the Author answers in the Affirmative: And invites any to whom his Reasons shall not appear cogent and conclusive; by a fair and full Answer to inform him better.----

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I have read his Pages, with mature Deliberation; and to me, his Arguments do not appear cogent and conclusive. Therefore, I shall endeavour to return an Answer, as fair, and as full, as my Capacity and Room will admit. ----- But I find his Stile so haughty, and his Conclusions so unguarded; that I don't think his Spirit is in a fit Disposition to receive Information. Therefore, I desire to be excused from addressing myself to him, but to his Readers; before whom I shall state the Case, in as clear a Light as I can, that they may judge for themselves. But first we must endeavour to understand the true Nature, and Design of the Question: And wherein the Difference lies, with respect to the Answer.

FIRST, concerning the Stating of the Question, I observe,

1. "ALL those who live under the Gospel Revelation." This does not include all the World, universally; nor is restrained to regenerate Souls, in particular; but all, and every Person, to whom the Word of Faith is preached.

2. "A DUTY required." Hereby I understand a bounden Obligation laid upon, and a Performance demanded from those Persons; as their own Act and Work.

3. "THE moral Law." Here I do not understand his Meaning: Whether he means the written Precept, or the universal Law of Nature: Whether he designs the Law as a Covenant of Works, or the Law in the Hand of the Mediator. Nor do I any where find that he has given his determinate Sense of the Word. Therefore, I shall take it in a general Sense: and enquire whether the Faith spoken of, be required of any Man, by any Law.

4. "FAITH in Christ." This is so left, as

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it is scarce to be explain'd; or, whether the Word [Faith] is here set down as a Substantive, or as a Verb. In common Speech, I should understand the former; but being call'd *Duty required*, seems to oblige me to understand the latter; which I should naturally have taken in, had he call'd it *Believing in Christ*: But in the form it is expressed, I am left to guess, whether the required Duty be, To have and possess, or, To do and work Faith in *Christ*. And in his whole Performance I do not find it explain'd; but some Times expressed in one Light, and some Times in another. But he tells us (Pag. 12, 13.) "Saving Faith is something that is peculiar to the select Number, who are described in Scripture under the Character of true Believers, and which is not found, in any others, but in them alone ---- It is also something, that is common to all true Believers without Exception." Therefore, whether this Faith be a Thing or an Action; or whatever it shall be found to be; I shall take it to be the very same, which in Scripture is called, *The Faith of God's Elect*.

5. "SAVING Faith." How this Word is to be understood; or in what Sense it is *Saving*, he has not inform'd us. Whether it is supposed to save Meritoriously, Conditionally, Instrumentally, or Influentially. Tho' the Word is very ambiguous, and liable to very gross Constructions, without a proper Distinction. But since he tells us (Pag. 10.) It "hath Salvation inferably affixed to it." I shall take his Meaning to be in general; *That Faith which accompanieth Salvation*. ---- Therefore, I presume, that without doing any Violence to the Intention of our Author; I may state the Question thus; *viz.*

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WHETHER any Obligation is contained in the Holy Law of God, whereby all Persons who have the Opportunity to hear, or read the Revelation of the Gospel of *Christ*, are required and in Duty bound, to have the Faith peculiar to God's Elect; or to believe to the Saving of the Soul?

THIS Question I answer in the Negative.

FOR, notwithstanding, Mankind is under the strongest Ties of Gratitude to his Maker; every Blessing received lays us under proportionate Obligations; every additional Favour increases the Obligation; every Degree of Power or Capacity bestowed, ought to be improved to the Glory of God; and every Discovery which God is pleased to make of himself, or of his Will, obliges us to the strictest Attention thereto, and Improvement thereof: And therefore the Promulgation of the Gospel of *Jesus Christ*, brings every Person that hears it (or has Opportunity to hear it) under an Obligation to give the most earnest Heed thereto; and makes it their Duty to search the Scriptures, that they may understand; and to incline their Minds to receive all the Instructions therein delivered; and practically to shew their Gratitude, in giving Honour to the Son, as to the Father: And the contrary Practice must needs contract Guilt to the Conscience, and add to Men's Condemnation: forasmuch as the Obligation is perpetual, and is necessarily corroborated by every Act of Kindness which proceeds from God to Man: Yet the precious Faith of God's Elect is no Part of the Duty required; but a spiritual Blessing, flowing from divine Grace; being the Gift of God, communicated to his Elect thro' *Christ*, by the Operation of the Holy Ghost. Therefore, the

Grace of Faith is absolutely above all Duties, Requirements, Performances, Acts of Obedience, or any created Power; and just differs from Duty, so far as the Influences of the Heavens differ from the Fruits which they produce in the Earth; it being that divine Influence from whence all true Obedience springs. Faith must exist in the Soul, before any Duty can be performed acceptable to God: But wherever the Blessing of lively Faith is, it purifies the Heart; and where the Heart is pure, there will be a Delight in the Law of God; and a Desire to know and practise all his Commandments. Moreover, as Faith is that rich heavenly Gift, whereby we come to enjoy *Christ*, and all spiritual Blessings in him; it is the highest Motive, and lays us under the greatest of all Obligations, to perform every Duty which the Law of God requires; but is not the Duty itself. Faith is of a Nature superior to any Thing that ever any Man did perform; or ever was in the Power of Man; or ever was, or ever will be, required of any Man; whether in Paradise, in the World, in the Church, or in the Kingdom of Glory. Special Faith is of a divine Original, absolutely above the Capacity of any created Being, to work, communicate, or procure; being the Work, and Gift of God alone; entirely depending on his sovereign Will.

SECONDLY, Concerning the Things wherein we differ, I observe,

1, THE Controversy is not, whether the Creature be under Obligations to Obedience; or left to his Liberty, and absolved from that Allegiance which is due to the Most High. --- For we agree with our Author (Pag. 6.) that Man in his Innocency had a perfect Copy of the moral Law impressed upon him; and by that
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Law was obliged gladly to embrace every Truth, and practise every Duty which God had made known, or for the future should at any Time make known to him : And this Obligation extended to the utmost Perfection of his Nature ; perpetually binding all the Faculties of his Soul and Body to strict Obedience. That all the Children of *Adam* are equally bound by the same Law : For it is one Law to all Mankind, and every reasonable Creature is under it. (Pag. 27.) And that Man having lost his Power (by Sin, which is his own Fault) to keep this holy Law, does not in any Sense dissolve the Obligation : It being impossible for a reasonable Creature to be looked from it, so long as he has an Existence. (Pag. 45, 46.)

2, WE agree (Pag. 3, 4, 5.) That *Jesus Christ* is not to be known by the Light of Nature : Nor is he revealed by the moral Law. (Pag. 27, 28.) That the Law and the Gospel comprise the whole Bible ; and are properly distinct from one another. That all Requirements are by the Law : But the Gospel is not a Law.

3, WE agree (Pag. 18.) That practical Unbelief is the Work of Men ; and wherever it is found, is a very great Sin. For whatever proceeds from the Corruption of Nature, as, Contempt of God's Word, Malice against the Truth, Pride, Self-Will, Sloth, Negligence, Love of the World ; or whatever hinders Men from a diligent Attention to the Gospel of *Christ*, is their Sin ; and will increase their Condemnation.

4, CONCERNING Faith, in many Particulars we agree (Pag. 10, 11, 12.) That it is not a bare Assent. --- It is not an ill-grounded Presumption. --- It is not full Assurance. --- But the Thing in Debate, simply is, *The Faith peculiar to God's*

God's People. (Pag. 6.) It is the Gift of God. (Pag. 13.) The Ground and Warrant of Faith is a preached Gospel. ---- The proper Object of Faith is the Lord *Jesus Christ.* (Pag. 11.) It is a glorious Truth, that the Grace of Election is prior to Believing; yet, cannot be known to any, but by Faith. (Pag. 25.) This efficacious Work of God in the Soul, never ends short of Salvation.

5, Nor do we differ about the Necessity of this Faith: For it is properly a Branch of the great Salvation; by it the whole of the Salvation of God is manifested to us; and none of the Blessings of Salvation can be enjoyed any other Way than by Faith; so long as we live in this World.

BUT the Difference lies in this. *viz.*

OUR Author asserts, That this special Faith is a Duty, which God requires from Man.

WE believe, The Faith of the Son of God is a divine Grace; peculiar to the Father of Lights to give, and to his Elect to receive: A Gift so rich, as it strongly binds to Gratitude; a Grace so spiritual, as it powerfully inclines to Holiness: And is the original Source of all the acceptable Duties, which are performed by the Children of God: But itself is of so different a Nature, that it is not possible to be made a Duty; or ever was required of any created Being.

EVERY Duty is the Performance of a Creature; and every Creature Performance is the Production of some Power, Principle, or Quality received from God; whereby that Creature is endued with a Capacity suitable to such a Performance. The Principle or Capacity, is the immediate Work, or Gift of God; the Duty or Performance required, is the right Improvement of that Blessing, which God has bestowed. Therefore, the Qualification must be *prior* to the Requirement

quirement; and the Capacity or Power of Action, *superior* to the Performance required to spring therefrom. In Creation, God did not require, but gave Life; and then required Obedience; or a due Improvement of the vital Faculties. Which Improvement on the Creature's Part, must needs be of a different Nature, and much inferiour to the creating Work on God's Part. So, where the divine Principle of Faith is communicated, by special Grace; that Soul becomes doubly obligated, doubly influenced, and doubly empowered to live unto God; not only in a diligent Attention to all Duties incumbent upon Mankind in general; but also to all Duties proper to the Christian in particular. But this Faith is not the Performance to which he is obligated; but the Matter whereby he is laid under the Obligation. It is not the Act of the Believer, but the spiritual Life, whereby he is enabled to act spiritually. It is not what God requires, but what he gives: not our Work, but the Work of God in us.

No Creature can be obliged to have, what never was given, or Power given to obtain: Nor can any Creature be obliged to do, what he never was endued with Capacity to perform. All Duties whatsoever, are comprised in one of these two Things; *viz.* Either a just Return for Benefits received; or a faithful Improvement of what is intrusted in our Hands. The Question then will be, What has a natural Man received, to produce in him, or qualify him for saving Faith?

1. If it can be proved, That the Faith of God's Elect, is not a spiritual, but a natural Principle; it will be found to be the Duty of Men to have it. Or, if it be a natural Work, it must be the Duty of Men to do it. For tho' it is not the Duty of *any* Man, to perform Things which

which are absolutely beyond his Line (as spiritual Things are to every natural Man) it is the Duty of every intelligent Being, to make the utmost Improvement of every Enjoyment, Capacity, or Opportunity which God has given him.

2, If the human Nature in the first Man (who was of the Earth, earthy) was blessed with the same rich spiritual Blessings, as the Saints are blessed with, in *Christ*; (who is the Lord from Heaven;) then, to have Faith, and bring forth all the Fruits of the Spirit; is the Duty of all that enjoy the external Ministrations of the Gospel. For tho' Man is not accountable to God, for the Continuation of his Being, which depends on the sustaining Power of God alone; he is accountable for those Virtues and Ornaments of the human Nature, which God planted in him and committed to his Trust. Therefore, whatever Excellency the human Nature was embellished with, in it's original Purity, but is now found wanting; brings the Creature under Condemnation.

3, If it can be demonstrated, That any of the Scriptures cited by our Author, or any other Text in the Bible; is verily the Language of the moral Law; that it is directed to the Hearers of the Gospel promiscuously; and that saving Faith is therein commanded; then it must be the Duty of all that hear the Gospel, to have that Faith. For whatsoever is commanded of God, is the indispensable Duty of every Person specified in that Commandment.

4, If it can be proved, That God's Commands and Requirements are meerly arbitrary, without Regard to what has been given, or ever was in the Creature's Power; or whether the Thing commanded be compatible with the Performance of a Creature, or not; Tho' this will not prove
the

the Fact, it will leave Room for Enquiry.

5, It will appear something in Favour of our Author's Position, if it can be made consistent with those Gospel Doctrines which he has acknowledged; as, Election, and final Perseverance. ---- But can it be made good Sense, That those who are not of God's Elect, should be commanded to have the Faith peculiar to God's Elect? That those who are not Heirs of Salvation, should be commanded to have that same Faith, thro' which God's Elect are saved? That it should be the Duty of Souls to receive *Christ* savingly, to whom he never was savingly given? Or, that a Faith (only) of that same Nature which perished in *Adam*; should be a persevering Principle in us, and never forsake *Christ*? ---- But since I do not find that our Author has demonstrated the Truth of any of these Things, I must take the negative Side of the Question.

CHAP. II.

A few Things distinctly considered, whereon the Strength of the Argument depends, and whereby the true Solution of the Question may be rendered conspicuous. 1, The Law and the Gospel. 2, The Grace of God and the Gift of Faith. 3, Righteousness and Holiness. 4, Salvation and Adoption.

FIRST, The Law, and the Gospel.

THE Law hath many and various Acceptations in Scripture, which are not my immediate Concern: But the Matter before us is that perfect Rule, whereby Mankind is bound to order his Conversation, in the Sight of God. The Foundation of every just Law, is a natural Obligation;

gation; whereby one Being becomes bound, in a Tie of Gratitude to another. As Children to Parents, for Birth and Education; Subjects to Princes, for Protection and Government; Servants to Masters, for Instruction, Maintenance, Wages, &c. And all Laws which are not founded upon some natural Obligation, whereby Obedience becomes the genuine Right of the Legislator, are no other than Tyranny. --- But the holy, just, and good Law of God, is most equitably founded upon the strongest Obligations. God first blessed *Adam* with the rich Blessings of Paradise; and then commanded Obedience. (a) He first blessed *Israel* with Deliverance from the House of Bondage; and then gave them his Statutes. (b) *Christ* first blesteth the Nations with the Light of his Gospel; and then requires them to submit to his Sceptre. (c) He first manifesteth himself to his Elect (so as he doth not unto the World;) and then enjoins them to observe (in his Church) all Things which he hath commanded. (d) Therefore, these Laws are equitable and just: Men themselves being Judges. Mankind received from God his Being, and his Well-being; his Heart, Soul, Strength, and Mind; therefore God justly requires those Powers shall be employed in Love, and Obedience to himself. (e) Nor is it possible this Obligation should cease, so long as God is God; and Creatures continue to be intelligent Beings. For in the Nature of Things, the Obligation must continue, in proportion to the Blessings they enjoy, and the Capacities they are endued with. --- The Holiness of God's Law, appears in the Things

(a) *Gen.* ii. 16, 17. (b) *Exod.* xx. 2, 3. (c) *Rev.* xiv. 6, 7. (d) *Matt.* xxviii. 20. (e) *Luke* x. 27.

commanded; which amount only to these two; viz. A perpetual Retention of our native Holiness, or that perfect Rectitude in which we were created; and a perpetual Devotedness to the God of Holiness, who is the Life of all Perfection. And herein also, appears the Goodness of this Law; in that it commands us not to depart from God, but cleave close to him: For all Happiness centers in God alone. And in that it commands us not to corrupt ourselves, but to continue in our native Purity: For none but a pure Nature is capable of enjoying God; and consequently of being happy. A distorted or infected Nature is incapable of Happiness: It carries Misery in the Habit and Disposition thereof. Nor is it possible for any Creature to be so disposed, and so accommodated with all created Blessings, as to be happy without the Enjoyment of God: But a perfect Nature cannot fail of the Enjoyment of God: And the Enjoyment of God cannot fail of making the Creature happy. So that the whole Law amounts to no more than this, viz. *Do thyself no Harm.* Or, maintain thy native Excellency; and continue in thy Felicity. So that holy, just, and good, are the intrinsic Qualities of the Law of God. (f)

THE Law is to be considered, either simply, as it is a natural and perpetual Obligation; arising from, and consisting in our Relation to God; Or complexly, as it is a Covenant between God and the Creature; consisting of Statutes, Promises, and Threatnings. Or, it is to be considered, in the Hand of the Mediator: Either in his providential Government of the World; or his spiritual Government in his Church. And without

(f) Rom. vii, 12.

a particular Distribution of the Law under it's proper Heads, we shall never understand what is promised, and what is threatned; what is accepted, and what is rejected from fallen Creatures.

THE Law, considered simply as a Law, without any further Distinction; is a relative Tie, or native Obligation; subsisting in the Relation between the Creator and the Creature: And is the perfect Standard, whereby all Duties are measured. And it is impossible for it ever to cease, or vary. For if the Creature has failed in one Point; he is not thereby loosed from his Duty; but laid under stronger Obligations to Confession, Repentance, &c. If he has lost his Power to perform the whole, or yield untainted Obedience; the Obligation is not weakened, but rather corroborated; binding him to exert all the Power that remains: To cease from every evil Practice, and practise all the Good in his Power: And if it were possible, to return to his original Purity: Yea, if it were possible, to make Satisfaction for all past Offences. But tho' these Things are not possible; yet, whatever is possible to any Creature in his present Circumstances, will still remain his Duty: And he can never be discharged so long as as he enjoys a Being: Whatever Changes happen; in Time, or to Eternity.

THE Law as a Covenant, considers God as a Governour, and Man as a Subject: God a perfect Sovereign, commanding; and Man a perfect Creature (so as he was in his primitive State) capable of performing perfect Obedience. And it is a strict Injunction, laid by the Most High upon the Creature: Binding him to an invariable Conformity to the Standard of perfect Uprightness: With Promise of an eternal Continuance (at least a Duration equal to his Obedience) in his

his created Felicity; and threatening (in Case of Failure) with Destruction, or Privation of all Happiness. Or, the Covenant of Works, is an irreverfible Sanction to the Law of Nature; inexorably binding all Mankind to a perfect, and perpetual Conformity, in Heart, Lip, and Life; upon Terms of eternal Life and Death. In this Senfe the Law is inflexible; and upon the fmalleſt Violation pronounces the Sentence of Condemnation: It ſuppoſes no Satisfaction, knows no Mitigation; admits of no Repentance, provides for no Reconciliation, nor gives any Aſſiſtance; but ſuppoſes the Creature ſufficient, and binds him to the Performance; nor can allow the leaſt Retrenchment; but either perfect Holineſs, or inevitable Deſtruction. (g)

THE Law in the Hand of the Mediator, is the very ſame pure native Law; and ſuppoſes that Law in the Form of a Covenant; without any Mitigation in the Covenant-Stipulations. But *Chriſt* becoming the Mediator of a better Covenant for his Elect; became reſponſible to all the Demands of the Law, on their Behalf: And having by his Obedience done Honour to the Law; and by his Sacrifice made ample Satisfaction for all their Tranſgreſſions; the damnable Sentence is entirely removed from them: (h) But the Duty ſtill remains: And *Chriſt* now governs his Church by the ſame Law, in the Hand of his Grace; whereby it becomes a Law of Love, and a Law of Liberty. (i) And *Chriſt*, in his Undertakings for his Church, and for his Elect's Sake; did in ſome ſort, become a Me-

(g) *Deut.* xxvii. 26. (h) *Rom.* viii. 1. (i) *Jam.* i. 25. ii. 12.

diator between God and all Mankind: (k) So far as, thereby the vindictive Wrath of God is postponed, or the Condemnation suspended in a providential Way, to the World in general: So long, to such a Degree, and upon such Considerations as God sees good, for his own Glory, and the Commodity of his Church. During which Period, *Christ* holds the Government of the World; and deals with Nations, or particular Persons, according to the same pure Law of Equity; but with such Regulations, or Mitigations, as are consistent with the fallen State of the Creature, and their Usefulness to his People. Not thereby setting them free from the Condemnation due to their Sins, against his Holy Covenant-Law; but averting the Punishment (already due) to the last Judgment; and in the mean Time, holding the Reins of Government in his own Hand. (l)

For Mankind has already forfeited all Manner of Blessings; but still God shews Favour providentially, to the Evil and the Good; and his *tender Mercies* are continued *over all his Works*. Which cannot proceed from any Right which a sinful Creature can claim; but in Consequence of the Interposition of *Christ*; through whom the World is continued, Judgment deferred, and Mercies granted; even to those who shall at the last Day be judged, and condemned by the righteous Law. For a present Reprieve, through the Mediation of *Christ*, for the Sake of his Church; does not suppose an Exemption from the deserved Punishment of their Sins. The old World being

(k) 1 *Tim.* ii. 5. (l) *Psal.* lxxv. 7, 8. *Prov.* viii. 15. *Dan.* ii. 21.

spared an hundred and twenty Years, did not prevent the Deluge at last; But their Wickedness during that Period, added to their Condemnation.

In the first Judgment, God proceeded according to the Rigour of the Law; expelling Man out of *Eden* for the very first Offence, the very same Day. And in the last Judgment, he will proceed in the same Manner: For whosoever are found in their Sins at that Day, shall be eternally banished from his Presence. But *Christ*, who for the sake of his People, interposed in the first Judgment; prevented the immediate final Destruction of Mankind, and took the World under his Protection, till the last Day. (m) In his Government he considers Mankind as they now are, fallen Creatures, and deals with them as such. When he makes them Examples of his Vengeance, it is not because they are not perfect in Holiness (for then must he do it to all) but for some very flagitious Crimes, or enormous Wickedness. (n) He grants Mercies to People and Nations; approves, and commends their Works, on account of some small Degree of Virtue therein; tho' far from being perfect. (o) And in this Capacity, *Israel* was governed in a particular Manner, in the Land which God gave them: Wherein Life and Death, Blessing and Cursing, are set before them, to terminate upon their Obedience and Disobedience. (p) And tho' God has not so immediately bound himself to other Nations, as he did to *Israel*; in Promises of Health,

(m) 2 *Pet.* iii. 7. *Joh.* xvii. 2. (n) *Exek.* xvi. 49, 50. (o) *Jer.* xxxv. 13, 19 *Jon.* iii. 10. (p) *Deut.* xxx. 19, 20.

Peace, Plenty, &c. upon Condition of Obedience; but has reserved a despotick Power, to dispence his Favours as he pleases; yet, we often find in Scripture, he has observed the same Rule with respect to other Nations. (q) But this always relates to temporal, not eternal Things. Nor can it be found in all the Bible, that ever God did offer eternal Life to any Man, upon any Condition whatsoever: Unless it was to Adam before his Fall; which was not eternal Life in a proper Sense; being only upon Supposition of his Obedience being eternal; but could not possibly be secured a Moment longer than it was held by the Tenure of perfect Obedience. But every Man that is a Sinner, is already condemned to eternal Death; and a condemned Malefactor is not in a Capacity to perform Conditions of Life: Therefore eternal Life cannot be attained any other Way than by the sovereign Gift of God. Yet; herein many mistake the Scriptures, where they find Promises of Life, and temporal Blessings, annexed to Obedience; they unwarily expound those Scriptures, to be meant of eternal Life and Glory. Whereas many Promises and Threatnings made to *Israel*, pertained only to that subordinate Covenant, which God was pleased to enter into with that Nation, for a Time, respecting their Enjoyment of the Land of Promise: (r) And had no Relation to eternal Things, only in a typical Way. (s) And whereas God frequently deals with other Nations in like Manner, by Way of Retribution; (t) This extends not to Things of an eternal Nature; but

(q) *Gen.* xx. iv. 6. *Acts* xii. 23. (r) *Jer.* xxxi. 32.
 (s) *Gal.* iii. 19. (t) *Jer.* l. 29. li. 49. *Mat.* x. 42.

to the Government of the World, in it's lapsed State. As a King's Son having seized an Army of Rebels, whose due Desert is to be immediately put to the Sword; but he suffers them not to be slain, neither to escape, 'till his Majesty's Pleasure shall be known concerning them: But takes them into Custody, and to prevent Confusion, prescribes some certain Regulations to them, during their Confinement: And whensoever his Father is pleased to grant a Pardon to any of them; the Prince communicates it to that Person, and sets him at Liberty: And those that pay any due Regard to the Rules prescribed, he allows them such Liberty as he sees good; and they that are most unruly, he holds in closer Confinement. But this Conduct has no Concern with the Tryal, and the Sentence which they (who receive no Pardon) shall receive at the Tribunal: Unless the Insolence of their Behaviour during their Confinement, be found to be an Enhancement of their Condemnation.

AND in this Light, the Law in it's native Obligation, made the Instrument of the propitious Government of the Mediator, requires Repentance in all Men every where. For the Goodness of God in his tender Mercy, and kind Benefaction, is a sufficient Inducement to lead thereto; and the Hopes of Judgments being averted, and our Tranquillity lengthened, in Consequence of a moral Reformation, is sufficient Encouragement therein. (u) But it is spiritual Grace alone, that produceth spiritual Repentance. For whatever Repentance, Reformation, or Regularity of Conversation, is pos-

(u) *Dan. iv. 27.*

fible to be wrought (in a Soul already fallen) by Promises, Threats, Mercies, Judgments, Commands, Perswasions, or any external Means whatsoever; can never arise higher than natural, and external: Nor can any Blessings be annexed thereto, only earthly, and temporal.

THE Law in the Hand of *Christ*, considered in the full Extent of his mediatorial Office; is the holy Will and Commandments of God, written in the Minds, or divinely impressed upon the Hearts of his own Children, by the Spirit of his Grace. (w) Whereby the Soul is made to delight in Holiness of Heart and Life; to hate, mourn for, and abandon Sin; to attend to God's Word and Will, with humble, cheerful, and diligent Obedience: With an insatiable Desire after Deliverance from all Sin, and dead Works; to live in the whole Will of God, and to be made conformable to *Christ*, in Righteousness and true Holiness. In these Souls *Christ* truly reigns; commanding with Love, and being obeyed with Delight: For these are *the People in whose Heart is his Law*. But in this Light, the Law has no Influence into eternal Things; nor is Obedience thereto any Condition of eternal Life. For 1, This Delight in the Law of God, is not found in any but those who are already blessed with a Principle of spiritual Grace, or eternal Life: (x) Whereby the Mind which was Enmity, is made subject to the Law of God. (y) 2, The Way in which that divine Principle, and this Conformity to the Will of God, is wrought in the Soul, under the Influence of the Spirit of Holiness; is through the Discovery which is made in the

(w) *Jer.* xxxi. 33. (x) *Joh.* iv. 14. (y) *Rom.* viii. 7.
Gof.

Gospel, of the rich Grace of *Christ*; in making their Case his own, and entering into surety Engagements for them; redeeming them from the Curse of the Law, by his precious Blood; justifying them from all Sin, by his own Righteousness; and giving them eternal Life, of his divine Bounty: (2) And consequently must be the Effect, not the Cause of eternal Blessings. 3, Therefore, as every Soul that is born again, in the Universe, experimentally knows, "That it was by the Manifestation of the rich Grace of God; in saving his People from their Sins, and freely giving eternal Life in *Christ Jesus*; that their Hearts were overcome with Love to him, and their Wills changed to delight in his Will;" They become dead to the Law, as a Condition of Life and Death. (4) They cease all Expectation of performing any Work, or producing any Virtue from their corrupt Nature, which can be well-pleasing to God. They look to *Jesus* alone, for Righteousness and Peace, for Life and Salvation, for Grace and Glory: And the Law of Gratitude so operates in their Hearts, that they are willing to be any thing, or nothing; to enjoy, or deny themselves; to do, or to suffer; to live, or to die, for his Name's Sake. (b) *For the Law of the Spirit of Life, in Christ Jesus, hath made them free from the Law of Sin and Death.*

Now, if the Law spoken of by our Author, be the natural Obligation in the Hand of *Christ*, as mediatorial Governour of the World; this does necessarily oblige all to whom the Gospel is preached, to repent, and turn from their sinful

(2) 1 *Joh.* iv. 9, 10, 19. (a) *Gal.* ii. 19. (b) 2 *Cor.* v. 14.

Practices, and diligently to adhere to the Gospel Revelation; for the Light thereof leaves them without Excuse. And Disobedience hereto, was the Cause of *Jerusalem* being laid even with the Ground. And will be required of all who neglect the Means which God affords. But the Law under this Consideration, can make no Promises of eternal Life; for it supposes Sin and Death already entered.--- But if he means the Law as a perfect Covenant; it knows nothing of Grace nor Salvation, Repentance nor Pardon. It has no Concern in commanding us to look to *Christ*, as a Saviour; or to seek for Mercy: But enjoins upon us a sinless Performance; in these Terms, *Do and live, fail and die.*---- And if he intends, The Law in the Hand of *Christ*, under the Sanction of special Grace; it knows nothing of Wrath or Damnation; but is a *perfect Law of Liberty*. The Enmity is slain by *Jesus Christ*: It is no more a killing Letter, or condemning Covenant; but a Rule in the Hand of the great Architect, for the modifying of his holy Temple: Who never casts away a Stone for Want of Conformity, but with unerring Skill, fashions them according to his own good Pleasure. (c) Yet, this Law, as it is a Holy Directory to the Saints through their whole Lives; is not without Conditions fixed in their proper Place. For notwithstanding the Law of God is in their Heart, and they delight therein after the inner Man; yet through the Mutability of their Dispositions, and Sin dwelling in them, they are apt to let it slip. Therefore, to keep their Minds awake, God has annexed to their Obedience, Promises

[(c) *Rom. viii. 29, 30.*

of such Blessings as suit the new Nature, and coincide with such Obedience: As his Presence with them, Enjoyment of his Love, their Prayers answered; &c. (d) with Threatnings of fatherly Chastisements, upon Disobedience. (e) For as it was with *Israel*; The promised Land was a free Gift, secured to them by Covenant; but the comfortable Enjoyment of the good Things thereof, depended much upon their Walking in God's Law: (f) So it is with the spiritual *Israel*; divine Grace is a free Gift, secured in *Christ*; but the comfortable Enjoyment thereof, while in the Body, depends much upon a humble Walking with God. (g) For tho' the unalterable Love of a Father, will not cast off a Child, because of his untractable Disposition, but use Means to have his Mind and Temper brought to a due Regulation; yet the more docible and attentive the Child is, the more it is to his own Comfort: And so it is with the Children of God; the more they live in the Will of God, the more spiritual Enjoyment they have, tho' their eternal State is not affected thereby. But here also, many mistake, in applying those Scriptures to eternal Glory or Perdition; which relate only to spiritual Enjoyments, in the present State. And it is my humble Opinion, That our Author missed his Way, for want of understanding the Law in it's distinct Branches.

THE Gospel is a Message of Glad Tidings, to the Sons of Men: And is directly opposed to the Law, as a Covenant. For the Law requires Obedience from us; the Gospel publishes Blessings

(d) *Job*. xv. 7, 10. *Rev*. iii. 19, 20. (e) *Ch*. ii. 5.
(f) *Psal*. lxxxix. 13—16. *Isa*. xlviii. 18, 19. (g) 2
Pet. i. 8. *Rev*. iii. 10.

to us: The Law proclaims Justice; the Gospel Mercy: The Law pronounces Condemnation to the Sinner, the Gospel Peace and Pardon. Yet, they don't in any wise contradict one another, but fully maintain and establish each other's Honour, and Authority. For as the Holy Law, righteously pronounces a Curse upon all Sinners; binding them over to eternal Condemnation, for the least Offence; the Gospel declares God to be gracious and merciful; and points out the Way in which this Grace and Mercy proceeds: In the Hand of the mighty One, *Christ Jesus*; by whom everlasting Salvation comes to the Sinner; without the least Infringement upon the Perfection of the Law. It represents these Things in a most clear demonstrative Light. Shewing how the Law is established by Grace; and Grace is magnified by the Law. In that the *Blessed God*, the *Father of Mercies*, and *God of all Consolation*; in the Depths of the unsearchable Riches of his Love, towards perishing Sinners; hath been pleased to raise unto his People a Saviour; even his own Son, *Emmanuel*; who is *God manifest in the Flesh*; in whom dwells all *Fulness* of divine *Perfection*; and into whose Hands, God the Father hath committed the Government of every Creature that hath a Being: *Him bath God, the Father sealed, sanctified, and sent into the World; to save his People from their Sins*: Which he must so perform, as that *the Lord shall be well pleased for his Righteousness Sake, for he will magnify the Law, and make it honourable*. And the *Mediator* is represented in his surety Engagements for his People, his actual Performance of his *Father's Will*, his penal Sufferings for Sin, the *plenary Satisfaction* made to the Demands of the Law, his *Advocateship* before the Throne, the *eternal Redemption* obtained for us,

and

and the *everlasting Righteousness* brought in by God's *Holy One*. With the Fulness of Grace which is treasured in *Christ*, for his Church: And his Faithfulness to maintain and perfect his Work, for us and in us, to the End. Also the *Spirit of Holiness* is represented in his *gracious Operations*: In that he hath spoken by all the Prophets, *which shewed before of the Coming of the just One*; and by all the Apostles, who preached Peace by the *Blood of Christ's Cross*. Who opens the Hearts of God's Elect, to receive the Word of his Grace; seals Instruction to their Souls, communicates to them the Love of God, and establisheth them in the Grace of our Lord *Jesus Christ*. So that, the Salvation prepared by God the Father, and wrought by God the Son, becomes the strong Consolation of his People, by the influential Operation of God the Holy Ghost.

HENCE the Gospel is a full flow of divine Grace; a free Proclamation of Life, Peace, Pardon, and everlasting Salvation: Without any mixture of Bondage, Threatnings, or Conditions required on the Creature's Part. For it sets forth *Christ* as the *New Covenant* of his People, answering all the Conditions of the legal Covenant. Perfect Obedience he performed in his Life; perfect Satisfaction for Sin, he made in his Death; perfect Holiness he communicates by his Spirit, from his own Fulness to the Souls of his People. Thus the Rich Blessings of the Gospel, compeately answer all the Demands of the Law. For as the Law gives nothing, but requires all; so the Gospel requires nothing, but gives all. As this Author acknowledges, "That all Requirements are by the moral Law, and the Gospel is not a Law." The Law and Gospel differ from each other; as the Statute whereby an Offender

is

is condemned, and the Account of his being ransomed, differ from each other. But in the Nature of Things the Law and the Gospel stand together: For a Gospel proclaiming Pardon, necessarily supposes a Law condemning; and the just Demands of the Holy Law must necessarily increase, in proportion to the Benefits of Gospel Light. But the Gospel itself makes no Demand upon any Creature; nor contains any Thing of a commanding Nature: But a pure Declaration of the Goodness of God; his free Donations, and rich Blessings. For thus we distinguish; that Part of the Word of God which teacheth us what we are to *do*, is *Law*; and that Part which informeth us what God will *give*, is *Gospel*.

Now, if saving Faith be a Duty required, it is required by the Law. But it never was in the Nature of the Law, under any Consideration, to require any Thing properly relating to eternal Salvation; only Gratitude for the Favour received: For whatever pertains to Salvation, is all of Grace, not of Works. The simple Law of Nature, as a Point of Gratitude, every Creature of God is under: And thereby bound, to exert all his Powers for the Glory of God, in every Thing that is practicable; but not in Things absolutely impracticable; as all Works peculiar to God, are to every Creature. But whatever pertains to Salvation is peculiar to God alone. (b) The Law in the Hand of *Christ*, as Governour of the World in it's fallen State, every Son and Daughter of *Adam* is under; and thereby bound, to make the utmost Improvement of every providential Favour which God is pleased to afford

(b) *Iſa.* xliiii. 11.

them: But touches not Things of an eternal Nature. But the Salvation of God in all it's Branches, is eternal. (i) The Law as a Covenant of Works, every natural Man is under; and thereby bound, to preserve the Rectitude of his Nature, unspotted Purity, untainted Virtue, and to persevere in all the Commandments of God; or else to perish eternally for his Sin: But it knows nothing of Mercy, or Salvation; nor requires any Thing as a Condition, or Means of Deliverance. (k) But Faith in *Christ* is a special Branch of Salvation. (l) The Law in the Hand of *Christ*, as King in his Church, every regenerate Soul is under; and thereby bound, to *live unto God*, to *walk as Christ walked*, to *deny themselves* of every Thing that is opposite to the Kingdom of God, to *take up the Cross* for *Christ's* sake, and to *follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth*: But it never threatens Persons with Damnation; for none are under the Law in this Sense, but such as are already blessed with Faith, and in a State of Salvation. It requires the utmost Degree of Gratitude, to God thro' *Christ*, for the Blessings of Grace bestowed on us; but does not require us to work those Blessings for ourselves. And it is a very high Degree of Ingratitude, in a Creature, to pretend to perform as a Duty, those divine Operations which are peculiar to the Son of God. (m) For so long as we form such low Conceptions of his Grace, as to imagine it to be the Duty of a Creature; we shall not render to him the Glory due to his Name. For albeit, we do not say, We did it, but acknowledge it the Gift of God; yet, while we call it a

(i) *Heb. v. 9.* (k) *Exod. xxxii. 33.* (l) *Eph. ii. 8.*
 (m) *Heb. xii. 2.*

Duty, we suppose it to be within a Creature's Latitude; and consequently we cannot admire his rich Goodness, nor feel such a Sense of Gratitude, as the greatness of the Grace requires. Therefore, the Faith of God's Elect is not the Duty of any Creature, nor ever was required by any Law. Those Things which are peculiar to God, and beyond the Capacity of any Creature, are absolutely above the Sphere of all Laws: As the taking away of Sins; the special Communication of divine Grace; and the Glorification of the Saints. These are all of pure Grace; flowing from the Father of Lights, in *Christ Jesus*, by the Holy Ghost: Freely published in the everlasting Gospel. For Salvation, Grace, and Glory, are the Subjects opened unto us in the Gospel; ascribed alone to the sacred Three-One; exclusive of all legal Obligations, or human Power. (n)

SECONDLY, The Grace of God and the Gift of Faith.

THE Grace of God is his eternal, infinite, superlative, Goodness; according to his absolute, unchangeable, irresistible Will; freely flowing from himself to his People; in such Streams of boundless Blessings, as shall not fail to make all his Children perfectly, and everlastingly happy.

FOR according to the Grace of God, preached in the Gospel; he is their God, and they are his People. Their Persons are justified from all Condemnation; and made acceptable in the Sight of God. Their Sins are forgiven, and their Souls

(n) *Isai.* xlv. 6. *Psal.* lxxxiv. 11. *Tit.* iii. 4, 5, 6. *Mat.* xxv. 34. *Joh.* xvii. 24. *2 Cor.* iii. 18.

are healed of all the Maladies, and purified from all the Infection of Sin. They are rescued from the Bondage of *Satan*; and every other Adversary. Their Passage thro' this World, and thro' Death itself, is secured against all the Attacks of Earth and Hell. Their Souls are blessed with the Knowledge of God, quickening Power, and divine Consolation. And the full Enjoyment of God in eternal Glory, is infallibly insured to them.

And this Grace is of sovereign Bounty, irrespective of any Good or Evil, done by the Creature. Without the least regard to Merits, Conditions, Terms, Performances, Dispositions, Works, or Qualifications whatsoever. Nor has the Vice or Virtue, Frowardness or Willingness, Capacity or Incapacity of the Creature, the least Influence to increase or decrease, to hinder or further, the Effects of this uncontrollable Grace. For God *will be gracious, to whom he will be gracious*. But it may be said, "Has not God a Regard to the Qualifications of his Creatures, in the Dispensation of his Favours?" I answer, Yes: God has respect to the Qualifications which his own Grace has wrought. And in the last Judgment he will distinguish between those that remain *unjust* and *filthy*, and those who *by Grace* are made *righteous* and *holy*. (o) *Thou puttest away all the Wicked of the Earth like Dross. But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly, for himself.* But no Man is godly by Nature; Godliness is the Product of heavenly Grace. And it is the Characteristick whereby God's Elect (being the Subjects of Grace) shall be distinguished for Heirs of Glory. (p) Likewise, whilst in this mortal

(o) *Rev. xxii. 11,* (p) *Rom. ix. 23.*

State, God dispenses his Grace in due Order : And has Respect to a former Grace-Qualification, as a Preparative for a future Grace-Blessing. He first qualifies a Soul with the *Grace of Humility* ; and then adds *more Grace*. (q) He first gives the *Spirit of Faith*, to believe in *Jesus* ; and then seals the Soul, with the *Holy Spirit of Promise*. (r) &c. But this is no Proof that God has any Respect to the good or bad natural Qualities of the Creature ; in chusing out the Objects of his Love : Or that any Thing in the Creature ; has any Influence in the Operation of his Grace. It does not take Place because of something in the Creature, which is valuable ; nor is it suspended because of something that is detestable. But esteems all Flesh as *Grass* ; and levels to the Ground, every Thing which is of *Man* ; the best and the worst together. (s) *That no Flesh should glory in his Presence* : But *that the Excellency of the Power may be of God*. He wants not our *filthy Rags*, to join with his *new Garments of Salvation* ; nor our *old Bottles* to hold his *new Wine* ; nor our *sandy Foundations* to build his *everlasting Tabernacle* upon : But makes a compleat *Riddance*, and makes *all Things new*. As a Prince going to build a Palace upon the Ground where a Beggars Cottage stood in Ruins. Suppose the Beggars was to build up his House again, he would build upon the old Foundation, and find many of the old Materials which would be useful again. But the Prince cannot find so much as a Stone, in all the old Building, that is fit for any Use in any Part of his Palace. But the whole is esteemed as Rubbish, and carried away as Dung : A new Foundation is laid, and

(q) *Jam. iv. 6.* (r) *Eph. i. 13.* (s) *Isa. xl. 6.*

all the Superstructure made entirely new. Or, as if a Prince should marry the Daughter of a poor Peasant. Was she married to a Person of her own Rank, that Peasant would be anxious about her Portion of Goods, and eagerly gather along with her, all the Lumber which her Father's House would afford her. But the Prince despises all the Furniture in her Father's House; values the best no more than the worst; nor will permit her to wear any Garment which she ever wore before; but clothes her entirely new, in royal Apparel of his own providing. Thus the Case stands: Unregenerate Souls can find many good Works, and Virtues in themselves; which they think may do great Service, to build their Hopes of Life and Salvation upon; but whosoever knows the Grace of God in Truth, esteems all his own Righteousness as *Dung*, and *Loss*; for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord. Grace does not seek, but give holy Principles: It does not contract for, but produce good Works. And brings the Soul to the Performance of Duties in a spiritual Manner; so as it never was capable of before. For 'till Grace becomes sovereign, the carnal Mind will never become subject to the Law of God. Thus, by Grace God's Elect are saved, exclusive of all their own Works, or Duties. Nor is it possible there should be any Confederacy between Grace and Works, with respect to eternal Salvation. For if it be of Works, it is no more of Grace.

Now, if Faith be a Duty, it is a Work: And if it be a Work, it has no Part in Man's Salvation: Otherwise, Grace is excluded. And if Faith be required by the moral Law, it is required of Man, as his Performance: And if so, it is the Righteousness of Man, and can bear no Relation to

to the Grace of God. But perhaps our Author may quibble, "That he did not say, Faith was a Duty which any Man ever did perform, tho' he said it was a Duty required of them." But be that as it will. If such a Requirement there be, as saving Faith in *Christ*; it supposes the Righteousness of *Christ*; or else Faith in him would be absurd. And if this Requirement be by the moral Law; it supposes the Righteousness of Man; for Obedience to God's Law is Man's Righteousness. (r) And thus he represents the Most High; as making a Law, whereby he requires Mankind to have a Righteousness of his own; thereby to obtain the Righteousness of *Christ*. But the Scripture of Truth conveys other Kind of Conceptions of God, and represents his Grace in a more glorious Light.

THE Grace of God the Father, is pure, free, sovereign, boundless Love; proceeding from the Bosom of his own eternal, infinite, immutable Essence; streaming forth to his Elect, through the Person of his only begotten Son; in his Counsels of Election, Adoption, Covenant Grace, and preparing for them a Kingdom, *from the Foundation of the World*; and in *the eternal Purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord*: Wherein he secured to them (in the Mediator) all the Blessings of Salvation, Grace, and Glory, *before the World was*. (u)

THE Grace of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, is pure, free, unchangeable Love to his Church, *even as to himself*; breaking forth in irrefragable Rays, in his voluntary Concurrence with his Father's Will, and undertaking to carry into Execution all his Counsels, concerning his Elect: Betrothing

(r) *Deut. vi. 25.* (u) *I Cor. ii. 7.*

them to himself for ever, in Marriage Union; revealing the Mystery of his Father's Love to them; and presenting them in his own Perfection, acceptable before his Father; procuring for them eternal Redemption, and everlasting Righteousness; and communicating to them of his Fulness, Life, Peace, Holiness, and everlasting Consolation: Securely defending them against all the Opposition that can arise, from Earth or Sin, Death or Hell; and raising them up in Glory, at the last Day. (w)

THE Grace of the Holy Ghost, is pure, free, unextinguishable Love, to God's chosen and redeemed People: Uncontrollably displaying it's ineffable Perfection, in vivifying Operations upon, and Grace Communications unto the Souls of his peculiar Ones: Illuminating their Understandings to behold, kindling their Affections to love, and strengthening their Hearts to trust in the Son of God: With divine Energy, inducting the Word of Grace into the Soul, with quickening, enlarging, establishing, and purifying Power: Enriching the Mind with Flows of Grace from the Father and the Son: Abiding with his Children as their Comforter, for ever: And at the last Day quickening their mortal Bodies; that they may be compleat in Glory and Tranquillity; in the ultimate Enjoyment of the eternal *Jehovah*. (x)

THIS unfathomable Ocean of Grace, residing in, and springing from the united Three, the undivided One; Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is the alone Fountain, from whence the precious Faith of the Son of God, is communicated into the Hearts of his People: Or, Faith is a Bright

(w) *Joh. vi. 39.* (x) *Isai. xl. 19.*

Ray, a Living Stream, a Fertile Branch, proceeding from the inexhaustible Fulness of divine Grace. (y) Therefore, it may justly be called, *The Gift of God, a spiritual Blessing, Living Water.* (z) &c. But it cannot with any Propriety be called *Man's Duty.*

CONCERNING Faith; The Author has written so confusedly, and left his Meaning so undetermined; (both in this and almost every Thing he treats on;) that it is sufficient to puzzle any Reader, to conceive, whether he wrote without Thought; or whether he did it with Design; that whosoever should undertake to answer him, or in whatever Sense they should take his Words; he might have Opportunity to slip away, by pretending they had mistaken his Meaning. --- Yet, thus far he has discovered himself, concerning the Faith he contends about; "That it is the Faith "with which Salvation is connected, and is peculiar to God's People, and common to all "true Believers." According to this Description; all human Faith, natural, historical, or however acquired or imbibed; is excluded from the present Controversy. Nor does it include the particular Distributions of Faith in God's Children: As, a full embracing of some particular Gospel Truths; a fixed Confidence and Satisfaction in some particular Promises; a Mind firmly stayed upon God in his Providence; the Soul abundantly filled with spiritual Joy; or so strengthened as to be Proof against some certain powerful Temptations. &c. For in such Cases there may be much Variation in the Christian, both as to Clearness of Understanding, and Sta-

(y) *Joh. i. 16.* (z) *Joh. iv. 10, 14.*

bility of Mind. But it is something, which no unregenerate Man ever did enjoy, and of which no Heaven-born Soul ever was destitute. Therefore, it is that vital Principle, communicated by divine Grace; whereby God's Elect are *delivered from the Power of Darknes, and translated into the Kingdom of his dear Son*. Or it is a spiritual Manifestation of *Christ* in the Soul, by the Light of the *pure Gospel*: Whereby the Soul is made *alive unto God*; efficaciously attracted, and spiritually united to *Christ*; and graciously enlarged, to apprehend, and receive of his Fulness, and behold his Excellency; so as to be transformed into his spiritual Image. Or, it is the spiritual Union between *Christ* and the Soul: Wherein *Christ* embraces the Soul, in the Arms of his Grace; and the Soul enjoys him, and rests in the Bosom of his Love: The nuptial Band, wherein *Christ* and the *Soul* hold Communion together. Or this distinguishing Faith, may be called a heavenly Fire, from the Sun of Righteousness, by the Word of Truth, thro' the Spirit of Grace, shining into the Soul: In the Light whereof, all heavenly Objects are beheld; in the Light and Heat thereof, all spiritual Blessings are enjoyed; and in the Heat thereof, all gracious Principles are nourished in God's Children. ---- The Gospel of the Grace of God is frequently called *The Faith*; because *Christ* the *Object* of Faith is therein revealed; and because that heavenly *Word* (in the Hand of the Spirit of Holiness) is the incorruptible *Seed*, whereby the vital Principle is begotten, or the Soul is born again. (a) And Faith, when spoken of as a distinct Grace, along with other

(a) 1 Pet. i. 23, 25.

Fruits of the Spirit; is commonly understood of the *first Fruit* of divine Life; that is, Belief, Trust, Affiance, or Recumbence on *Christ Jesus*; as the Saviour of Sinners, and Fountain of divine Grace. But Faith taken in it's full Extent, is the *divine Life* itself: Or *Christ* dwelling in the Soul; and the Soul living spiritually by *Christ*. Which Life includes all the Blessings of Grace bestowed upon or received by the Believer; and all the spiritual Principles produced in him. So that in whatsoever Respect a regenerate Person differs from a carnal Person; in experimental Things; be it in Enjoyment, or in Disposition; it is Faith that makes the Difference. Nothing less than this Life of *Christ* in his People, is the precious Faith of the Saints. And if any Thing less than this be intended by our Author, he gives it a false Title in calling it *saving Faith*. Therefore I observe,

I, THIS Faith is not an Action, Work, Performance; or Thing done by a Creature: For if so, then all those Things which the Scripture attributes to Faith, must belong to the Act of the Creature. As being *justified* by Faith, *living* by Faith, *standing* by Faith, *sanctified* by Faith, *having Access* by Faith, *receiving the Promise* by Faith, being *Children of God* by Faith, *kept by the Power of God* through Faith, *saved* through Faith, being *risen with Christ* through Faith. &c. But I humbly hope, No one that understands these Things in a Scripture Light, and by inward Experience, will imagine them to proceed from their own Performances. There is a specific Difference between an Action, and an in-dwelling Principle. Stephen is called, *a Man full of Faith and of the Holy Ghost*. Barnabas is called, *a good Man, full of the Holy Ghost, and of Faith*. It is said

said of *Timothy, Lois, and Eunice*, that *unfeigned Faith dwelt in them*. Yet, it is not an inherent Principle, of the Production of Nature; but of divine Original. Nor is it a Principle planted in the Soul, to be nourished by the Virtue of Nature; for the dry Tree of Nature, can yield no Supplies to spiritual Things. Nor is it created and fixed in the Soul, to abide as a Principle of a separate Existence; but it is the Life of God in the Soul, proceeding from *Christ* the living Fountain, and maintained by perpetual Communication; where, by a spiritual Union subsists between *Christ* and the Soul: And by Virtue of this spiritual Union, the Soul is made Partaker of all the Gracefulness of *Christ*; *Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption*.

2, THIS living Faith is not wrought, procured, or attained by any created Power. But it is the Gift of God, and Work of the Holy Ghost; as our Author has acknowledged: Nor is it possible for any Man to have any Hand in it; unless he can pretend to be a Co-operater with God; to whom alone the Work is ascribed. *Through Faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the Gift of God.---- Faith of the operation of God.---- Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith*. The Prayer of the Disciples was, *Lord increase our Faith*. The Prayer of the Apostle for the *Thessalonians*, was, *That God would fulfil the Work of Faith with Power*. Here is no Mixture of human Operation.

3, THIS special Grace of Faith, which is from God alone, is not an Instrument put into the Hand of the Soul; therewith to work, to give, to receive, or to use in any wise. For an Instrument is inferior to, and at the Disposal of the Hand that holds it. **But it** would be very absurd, to think that the divine Principle of Grace, where-

by the Soul enjoys spiritual Life, Union with *Christ*, and divine Consolation; should only be an Instrument in the Hand, and at the Management of a Creature. For whatever is performed by any Instrument, in the Hand of any Person; is performed by the Person who *acteth* that Instrument. Therefore, if Faith be subject to our *Actuation*, all the Blessings thereby enjoyed, are to be ascribed to our Attainment. ---- I have often read, and heard Talk of *acting Faith*. But I confess, I don't understand it. I cannot learn any such Thing, from the Word of God. Neither can I conceive of it from my own Experience; having been blessed with special Faith in my Soul, above thirty Years; but I do not remember any such Thing as myself *acting Faith*; nor have I any Knowledge, how to go about it. And I have enquired of many, whom I have heard speak of it; to know what, or how it was; but I did never meet with any Person that could inform me, how they *acted Faith*. I know Faith is an *active* Principle: But there is a material Difference, between it's *Activeness*, and being *acted*. I am very sensible there is what may be call'd, *Acts of Faith*: And I can very well understand it when spoken of Faith *acting*, or producing *Acts*; but am entirely ignorant, how *the Faith of the Operation of God*, should be *acted* by a Creature. ----- By *Acts of Faith* I understand, 1, The Actings, or Operations of Faith (or the Grace of God) upon the Soul. In vivifying, illuminating, uniting, enlarging, strengthening, purifying, comforting Influences; &c. Wherein the Soul is entirely passive; as the Earth is, in receiving Light, Heat, and Influence from the Sun. 2, The Actuation of Faith in the Soul. Whereby it is powerfully moved to love, look unto, breathe after,

after, believe in, stay upon, wait for, and cleave to *Christ*, as it's Life and Salvation, &c. Wherein there is a kind of *Activity*; and yet a real *Passiveness* in the Soul, As in the Trees and Plants, shooting forth, budding, blossoming, and bearing Fruit; which proceeds not from their own *Activity*, nor yet from unnatural Constraint; but becomes necessary by the unfrustrable Power of God, and yet natural and genuine, by the Influence of the Sap ascending into the Branches. Or, as the Operation of the vital Parts of the Body, Circulation of the Blood, beating of the Pulse, Respiration of Breath, &c. Which is not the proper *Act* of the Man, nor yet any Violence upon his Nature, or his Will; but the necessary, and yet natural Production, of that living Principle which is in him. So the Soul ascends towards *Christ*; not as it's own proper Act (much less the Soul acting Faith) as it is not under the Determination of his own Will; but under the powerful Actuation of special Faith, or irresistible Grace, the Mind is exited, sweetly and willingly drawn, or carried as on Eagles Wings; so as all his internal Powers are elevated, and delightfully exercised upon *Christ* the Object of his Love, his Life, Joy, and only Rest. 3, Those proper voluntary Acts of the Person, which are done in Faith, under the Influence of the Spirit of Grace; as Prayer and Praise, seeking and waiting upon God, following *Christ* in all his Ordinances, denying ourselves and taking up the Cross for *Christ*'s sake, loving his People, keeping his Commandments, &c. These may be call'd Acts, or Works of Faith; because Faith working by Love, is the Root from whence they spring. (b)

(b) *Heb.* vi. 10. xi. 2. 39.

4, FAITH is not an Instrument in the Hand of *Christ*, wherewith he operates upon the Soul. For an Instrument is properly distinct from the Hand that holds it. But Faith is a Communication of Life from *Christ*; a Branch springing from his Fulness: And can no more exist separate from *Christ*, than the Sun-Beam can exist separate from the Sun; or the Stream can continue, separate from the Fountain; or Life diffuse itself into a Member, separate from the Body. *Christ* is the Life of his Church; and his People live by him; and they live by Faith; which is the self-same Thing. For he that lives by a perpetual Stream, properly lives upon the Fountain, from whence that Stream proceeds. Again, one Being working upon another, by an Instrument, implies a Kind of Distance between the Operator, and the Matter operated upon. *But he that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit.* Faith is not a Thing that can stand alone. It is a relative Term; and always implies some Kind of Union between two Beings: Wherein there is a cleaving together, in a Constancy towards, and Confidence in one another. At least, on the one Part Goodness, Sufficiency, or Fidelity; and on the other Credence, Expectation, and Dependence: So as the one is attracted, and cemented to the other; so far as this mutual Satisfaction extends. But if there be a Cessation of this Union; or this mental Relation be dissolved; then Faith is not. If Faith be separated from it's Object, it has no Existence. Our Author tells us, "The Matter of Justification, Faith hath not, nor can ever find in itself; but only in it's glorious Object." It is true. Neither Justification, nor any other heavenly Blessing, is to be found any where but in *Christ* alone. But those who understand what the

the Faith of *Christ* is, need not be told, That nothing can be found therein, exclusive of *Christ*: For Faith is not to be conceived of, exclusive of it's glorious Object. Consider it separately, and it has no *Self*: It is a Non-Entity. --- While we esteem Faith as an Act, a Work, a Duty, an Instrument, or a separate existing Principle; we can scarcely speak of it in Scripture Language, but we shall be in Danger of putting it out of it's Place; and setting it in the Room of *Christ*: And so detracting from the Glory of *Christ*, in ascribing that to an Act, or Instrument, which belongs to the Object. But if we conceive of it in it's true Light, as inseparable from *Christ*, it's alone Object, Author, and Finisher; we cannot ascribe any Thing to Faith, but in so doing, we ascribe it to *Christ*, and to his Holy Spirit. As every Thing that is ascribed to the Light of the Day, or to the Heat of Summer, is tacitly ascribed to the Sun. If a Woman shall ascribe to the bare Act, or Ceremony of Marriage, all the Blessings and Satisfaction which she enjoys in her Husband; she puts that Ceremony out of it's due Place: But if she take Marriage in it's full Extent, for the Relation to, and Enjoyment of her Husband; whatever is ascribed thereto, is ascribed to himself: For it is he that fills the Relation: Take him away, and the Marriage is no more. So *Christ* is the Fulness, which his Children enjoy by Faith: No spiritual Blessing proceeds from him, to his Church below, any other Way; nor can any Blessing be enjoyed by Faith, but what proceeds immediately from himself. If it were not so, Faith would be found to be very much idolized in the sacred Oracles; where many Things are ascribed thereto, which cannot belong to any but the divine Being, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Ghost.

5, FAITH is not capable of being purchased by any Price. (Notwithstanding our Author unwarily asserts, "It is purchased for us by *Christ*.") For whatsoever is obtained by Purchase, is procured by the Purchaser, from some Hand distinct from himself: But Faith proceeds from *Christ*, as it's native Original. Every one that is blessed with the Faith of *Jesus*, experienceth it to be wrought in his Soul, in the same manner as a Virgin is brought to have Faith in the Man, to whom she wisely and willingly gives herself in Marriage. That is, by beholding the Amiability of his Person, and Behaviour; being assured of his Sufficiency, and Virtue; and having Demonstration of his Love, and Fidelity to herself: Whereby her Affections are attracted, and her Heart incouraged to trust him as her Husband; and chearfully to give her Love, and her Person into his Bosom. So, the Gospel abundantly demonstrates the unsearchable Riches of *Christ*, the Fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him, his All-sufficiency to save, his matchless Love, his boundless Grace, his Wisdom, Power, Faithfulness, and Immutability, &c. And this Revelation attended with the efficacious Influence of the Spirit of Holiness, communicates such a Flow of Light, Life, Love and Power, from God to the Soul; that it is invincibly drawn by Cords of Love, to *Christ*, as it's only Joy and Portion; and enabled to trust in him, as it's only Hope and everlasting Rest: And so embraceth him, as the alone Fountain of all it's Happiness, and giveth up it's whole Self to him, as it's sovereign Lord; it's all in all. Thus, the precious Faith, is nothing more, or less, then a spiritual Union between *Christ* and the Soul. A vital Commu-
nication

nication of divine Grace from *Christ*; attracting,
 and cementing the Soul to himself; filling it with
 those rich Blessings which center in, and proceed
 from him; and causing it to bring forth Fruit to
 his Glory. This Faith is the *Gift* of God the
 Father; as he is the original Fountain of all
 Grace. It is *Life* from *Christ*; as he is the Re-
 pository of all Grace. *For as the Father hath Life*
in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have Life
in himself. For it pleased the Father, that in him
should all Fulness dwell. It is the Operation of God
 the Spirit; as he proceedeth from the Father and
 the Son. *All Things that the Father hath are mine:*
therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall
shew it unto you. And it is the Fruit of the Word
 of God; as that Word is an *Instrument* in the
 Hand of the Spirit of Grace; and under his In-
 fluence, is made the *Seed* of the Kingdom of God.
 (c) But in whatsoever Light we conceive of it,
 it is contrary to the Nature of Things, that Faith
 should be purchased. Unless (in an improper
 Sense) we mean thus. *Christ* is the Object of
 Faith in all that he *is*, in all that *proceeds from him*,
 in all his *Engagements*, in all that he has *performed*,
 in all wherein he is now *employed*, in all that he
 has *promised*: Therefore he is the Object of Faith
 in the Purchase which he made of his Church;
 for by Faith we receive Comfort and Satisfaction
 therefrom. Or else, That through *Christ's* pur-
 chasing of his Church, and so his Church be-
 coming his own Property, in a Law Sense; a
 Way is made for the Communication of his hea-
 venly Grace to their Souls. We ought duly to
 distinguish, between those Things which were

 (c) 1 *Thess.* i. 5.

originally in *Christ*, and proceed from himself; as all influential Grace, and Glory does: Those Things which are the Works of *Christ*, which he has performed, and is performing, or will perform; as fulfilling God's Law, suffering for Sin, making Intercession, raising the Dead; &c. those Things which are the blessed Consequences of his Performances; as Redemption from the Curse, Pardon of Sin, Justification, Deliverance from all Death and Misery; &c. and that which *Christ* purchased for his own Property, his Portion, his Possession, and his own Enjoyment. For whatever Way might be made, thro' *Christ*'s Purchase, for Blessings to proceed to his Elect; *Christ* did not purchase any Thing, in a direct and proper Sense, but *the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own Blood*. This alone is his *purchased Possession*. *Bought with a Price*. ---- *Thy Congregation which thou hast purchased of old*.

6, FAITH is not one particular Grace, or Fruit of the Spirit, distinct from the rest. For it is the Way in which all the particular Fruits of the Spirit proceed. Spiritual Grace in all it's distinct Branches, is no other but Faith diversified; or Faith decorating and enriching the Soul, with such a Variety of Branches, and in so many different Streams. For when we speak of Faith (whether it relates to God, or Creatures) it intends something more than bare Credence, or believing that a Thing is so. It always supposes some Degree of Confidence reposed in some Being: (Unless when it is understood of Fidelity, or Sincerity, to be confided in :) And this Confidence cannot exist without some Love to that Being: There may be *Love* where there is no *Trust*, but there cannot be *Trust* where there is no *Love*. There cannot be a real Confidence in *Christ*,
but

but it must be attended with, and productive of all other spiritual Fruits, in some Degree. *Faith worketh by Love.* And every Believer finds in his own Experience, (if he has Understanding to make a due Observation) that his Confidence in *Christ*, and his Love to *Christ*, always keep equal Pace. For Faith cannot consist without both. And these are the Channels through which every Believer experienceth every Grace of the Spirit to proceed. Observe, whatsoever Quality, or Disposition of Soul, is in Scripture ascribed to the Spirit of Grace; as Humility, Purity, Thankfulness, Patience, Zeal, Hope, Heavenly-mindedness; &c. All proceeds from a fixed Confidence in, and a united Affection to *Christ*. Again, those Things which are ascribed to Faith in the Word of God, cannot be ascribed to one single Fruit of the Spirit. As, *We walk by Faith*; Which supposes *Light* to see the Way, *Strength* to support us, *Love* to stimulate us, and *Hope* to encourage us. So, to be *rich in Faith*, is to be enriched with all the spiritual Blessings which flow from the Son of God, and to abound in all the Fruits of the Spirit.

7, SPECIAL Faith is not a bare Operation, wrought upon the Soul by meer Wisdom and Power: As *Christ* turned Water into Wine. For by such an Operation the Quality would become inherent in the Man: A Piece of Work performed, but not an immortal Seed, or vital Spring: And consequently might be lost. Hereby a Person might receive noble Principles, and become a more refined Creature; but the Root would be in himself, as it was in the first *Adam*: And he would not live by the Son of God: *Christ* would not be his Life. Nor would it be *Faith in Christ*, whatever Operation could possibly be wrought;

until a vital and reciprocal Union did commence, between *Christ* and the Soul. It may be objected, "That by an Operation wrought upon the internal Powers, the Soul becomes capable of drawing, and receiving of *Christ's* Fulness," I answer, If the Principle wrought, did subsist in the Man's Self; without immediate Communication from God; it would be the proper Work of the Man to actuate that Principle: And then, the drawing and receiving of Grace from *Christ*, would depend upon the Application of a Creature; Or rather, upon the Concurrence of two Creatures: For that imaginary Principle itself, must be a distinct Creature. And I know, this is the Way that some Persons speak; of a new Creature in the Man: Instead of speaking in the Scripture Stile, *If any Man be in Christ, He is a new Creature.* But if this imaginary Creature be not perfect, it is not the Work of God; and if it be perfect, the Man must have Perfection in himself; and can neither seek, draw, nor receive Grace from *Christ*. For that which is perfect, is full; and that which is full, can hold no more.--- But the Faith of God's Elect, is not a Creature or Principle separately subsisting: or a meer Operation upon the Man. But it is divine Life kindled in the Soul, by the powerful Rays of the Sun of Righteousness: Or a heavenly Stream, flowing into the Soul, from the Fountain of living Waters: Maintained by the constant Communication of Grace, or spiritual Influence; from the Father, thro' the Son, by the Holy Ghost. Nor can it have any Existence, separate from it's divine Author, and glorious Object; any more than the Moon can diffuse Light in the World, without receiving Illumination from the Sun; or a Man's Image in a Glass, can subsist without the Man's Person.

THEREFORE,

THEREFORE, to live by Faith is to live by *Christ Jesus*: For the Saints know no other Life but the Son of God. The Believer lives (spiritually) by *Christ*, as really and substantially, as a Child in the Womb lives (naturally) by it's Mother; or a Branch lives by the Tree it grows upon. For as there was an indissolvable Union, subsisting between *Christ* and his Church, from the Foundation of the World, secured in the Councils of the eternal Bosom; *The Fellowship of the Mystery, which from the Beginning of the World, hath been hid in God, who created all Things by Jesus Christ.* So, whensoever a Soul is blessed with the Faith of *Jesus*; a manifest, social, experimental Union is commenced; which is absolutely inseparable, as it depends not upon any Thing in the Creature, but solely upon the Immutability of *Christ*: And by Virtue of this Union, there is a spiritual Communion between the Soul and it's Beloved; and a vital Communication from the living Head, to the united Member. *And of his Fulness have all we received, and Grace for Grace.--- Because I live, ye shall live also. At that Day ye shall know, that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.--- That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us.--- I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.--- That the Love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them.--- I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the Life which I now live in the Flesh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God.--- I travail in Birth again until Christ be formed in you,--- That Christ may dwell in your Hearts by Faith.--- Which is Christ in you the Hope of Glory.--- He that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.* And the Blessings which proceed from the Fulness of *Christ* alone, and cannot be attributed to any other;

other; are communicated to us by Faith; and our Enjoyment thereof is ascribed to Faith. Therefore it is called, *Precious Faith*. -- *Most holy Faith*. -- *The Faith of God's Elect*. &c. For when Faith is understood in the most extensive Sense, in which the Holy Ghost makes Use of the Word, in the lively Oracles; it includes nothing less than the Light, Life, Love, Joy, Peace, Holiness, Wisdom, Power, and Grace-Fulness of *Christ*, in the Hearts of his Children. For notwithstanding the Word *Faith*, hath it's various Acceptations, in the Word of God; That Faith which is peculiar to the select Number, whereby the *Elect* are distinguished from the *Rest*; is the same with *Regeneration*: Or rather, it includes the whole that a Saint receives from God, or enjoys of God, on this Side the Grave: *Regeneration*, *Illumination*, *Sanctification*; and *Consolation*. For whatever Discoveries are made of *Christ*, whatever Operations of Grace are wrought, whatever spiritual Blessings are communicated, whatever Consolations are enjoyed, or whatever is experienced of the Love of God, while in this Tabernacle; it comes to the Soul thro' Faith. And *Faith is the Substance of Things hoped for, the Evidence of Things not seen*.

It may be said, "The Thing in Debate, is "Faith: Not the Degrees of it." I answer, Neither am I meddling about the Degrees, which a Child of God may be blessed with; but to shew, That Saying Faith is nothing less than *Christ* dwelling in the Heart. And whatever the Degrees of Enjoyment may be; the Thing enjoyed by the weakest Babe in *Christ*, is the very same in Kind, with that enjoyed by the strongest Saint.

THEREFORE, there is nothing of the Nature
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of Duty, Act, Work, or Creature Performance, in this divine Faith. For as it is a spiritual Blessing, given us by the Father, in *Christ Jesus*, before the Foundation of the World; and in due Time communicated to the Soul, by the omnipotent Grace of the Holy Spirit; whereby the Soul is made alive unto God; it naturally, and necessarily differs from a Duty, as much as my being a living Creature, differs from the Duties to which I am bound, as a Creature of God: Or, as much as the Light of the Day differs from the Duties incumbent upon me to do, during my Enjoyment of the Light. And whatever may be imagined by *Arminians*; or Persons who neither understand the Scriptures, nor experience the Power of Faith in their own Hearts; To those who experimentally, and judiciously understand what this Faith is; it would be as good Sense, to call upon them to transform themselves into Angels; to transplant themselves into Heaven; or to fix new Courses to the Sun and Stars; as to tell them, The Faith of the Son of God is a required Duty. But it may be objected, " Faith cometh by Hearing, and it is the Duty of every Creature to use the Means." This was never disputed. The Question is not, Whether every Creature is bound in Duty to use the Means, which God has appointed? But, Whether the heavenly Grace itself be a Duty? It is the Duty of every Creature, to do whatsoever God commands them, to the utmost of their Power: Therefore it must be their Duty, to attend diligently to the Word of God. But it never was the Duty of any Creature, to enjoy that, which it never was the Pleasure of God to give: Therefore, unless it be the Will of God, to bless his Word with the Power of his Holy Spirit, so as to produce Faith in the Soul;

Soul; it cannot be the Creature's Duty to have it.

OBJECTION. But if it be not a Duty, to have the Essence of Faith; is not the Act of Believing a Duty?

I ANSWER, Believing seems to have an active Signification, and sounds more natural, to be called a Duty. But Believing spiritually in *Christ*, must proceed from the Essence of Faith: And then, the Duty cannot be required of ungenerate Sinners (as our Author says it is) but of those who have obtained the precious Faith. But believing is not the direct *Act* of the Creature; any more than my corporeal vital Parts performing their proper Office, is my *Act*. It is that Life which God has fixed in me, which produces that Operation, and not my Activity. But those natural Things which require an active Operation, we commonly express in the active Voice; as, I breathe, You sweat, He lives; &c. Tho' they are not at the Option of the Person, to do, or restrain: Neither do we understand them, or intend to speak of them, as the proper *Acts* of the Person. So, believing in, cleaving to, embracing, and resisting upon *Christ*, for Life and Salvation; are not *Acts* of the Person in a proper Sense: But the immediate Product of that Life of Faith, which the Soul enjoys from God. And this, every experienced Believer knows in his own Soul; whether my Author knows it, or not.

BUT concerning *Believing* (in any Sense) or embracing any revealed Truth: It is (in an improper Sense) Man's Duty, to believe whatever God has declared in his Word. For the Evidence is so strong, and clear; that he must believe it, and cannot but believe it, if he gives due Attention. Especially, Things which are quite plain

plain to common Understandings. It must be some base Principle, as, Sloth, Contempt, Pride, Enmity; &c. which prevents his receiving of them. Therefore, while he has such Opportunity, his Neglect is inexcusable. But in a strict and proper Sense, it is not (nor possibly can be) the Duty of any Man to believe any Proposition, relating either to Heaven or Earth. *Believing*, or being perswaded of the Truth of any Thing, is not *Action*, but *Passiveness*. It depends intirely upon Demonstration, or Strength of Evidence, ponderating in the Judgment. Whatsoever is in a Man's Power to believe; it is not possible for him to disbelieve; till the Evidence shall appear to him in another Light. And whatsoever has not Strength of Evidence to prevail upon his Judgment; is impossible for him to believe; until he receives further Demonstration: Unless he lay aside his Reason; and yield a blind-fold Assent. For whether the prevailing Evidence be true or false; the Understanding is passive, in being drawn to an Assent: Tho' it may, and ought to be active, in making the closest Enquiry after Truth. Therefore the Duty consists in diligent Application, and the opposite Sin consists in Negligence. But where Evidence fails, or the Understanding is not able to receive it; an implicit Assent is not any Man's Duty. For tho' I assent, with all the Powers of my Soul, to many Things in the Word of God, which are Mysteries absolutely above my Comprehension; it is because I am fully assured, they are spoken by him that cannot lie. And they are attended with such Demonstration; both of the Certainty of their Being; the Necessity of their Being; and the Glory and Blessedness which proceeds from them; that (tho' I cannot conceive how they are)

I cannot possibly disbelieve them : But were they not attended with such Strength of Evidence, nor declared by God himself ; I could not possibly believe them. And yet, Believing the Truth of any Proposition, or assenting to what is revealed in the Word of God ; is a different Thing to believing in the Lord *Jesus Christ*, for Life and Salvation. The former is only a Swasion, or Conviction of the Understanding ; which may be wrought by Dint of Evidence, and Demonstration. The latter is a Gift, *given in the Behalf of Christ* : And proceedeth by the *Spirit of Faith*. It requires attractive Power and Love, to cause me to trust in *Christ* with all my Heart, seek him with all my Soul, wait for him, and fly to him, as the alone Salvation of God, and Foundation of my Hope. This is a Work above all the Powers of Nature, and depends upon the powerful Actuation of special Grace ; but can never be performed by any Creature, as his own *Aff*, or *Duty*.

OBJECTION. If Faith be not a Duty, Unbelief is no Sin.

ANSWER. What Faith soever is attainable, or in what Sense soever it is so ; certainly is Man's Duty to attain : Or whatever Means God has appointed, or whatever is practicable to a Creature, is an indispensable Duty. For the perfect Law of God can never require *less*, than all the *Heart*, all the *Soul*, and all the *Might*. And what Unbelief soever is positive, or practical ; or in what Sense soever it might be avoidable, that is, if it be of the Creature, existing in, or proceeding from the Creature ; thro' Ingratitude, Disobedience, Contempt, or any evil Disposition ; it is a damnable Sin. For the Holy Law of God can never admit of any practical or mental Disregard,

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Opposition, Inattention, Neglect, or wandering from God. And Unbelief (in a Scripture Sense) consists in these Things. And this *positive Unbelief* is the Original of all Sin: For it is a departing from God; and all manner of Sin is included therein, and proceeds therefrom, as Streams or Branches thereof.

BUT the Faith of God's Elect, is a divine Blessing, of sovereign Grace: Out of the Latitude of all Creatures; and in the Nature of Things, impossible to be a Duty. Consequently, that *Negative Unbelief* which is opposed to this Faith, is only a Vacuity; to be without, or destitute of that Blessing, which God was never pleased to bestow: Which in the Nature of Things, cannot possibly be charged upon any Creature, as his Sin. This is quite foreign, to that Unbelief which is condemned in the Word of God. The one is a real Evil, cleaving to, residing in, proceeding from, or practised by the Creature. Of the other we cannot form any Conceptions, but a *Non-entity*. What never was: Neither a Thing, nor an Action, nor a Quality in any Creature: Which the Creature never touched, nor ever touched him; nor ever was possible for him to have any Concern with. This can no more be a Sin, than it is my Sin that I am not an Angel; I was not born before the Flood; I am not of a different Species, or different Sex to what I am; that I am not what God was not pleased to make me; which no Man of common Sense will affirm to be my Fault. Therefore, if Men talk of *saving Faith*, and call it a *Duty*; until they can prove it to be something which is within the Bounds of created Power, we deny it to be a Duty. And if they talk of the opposite to this Faith, calling it Unbelief, and assert it to be a

Sin; until they can make it appear, that it is a Substantive, an Adjective, or a Verb; or something more than a Non-entity; we deny it to be a Sin.

THIRDLY, Righteousness and Holiness.

RIGHTEOUSNESS is a perfect even Ballance between two Beings. And the Relation subsisting between those Beings, is the Standard whereby it may be measured. It consists in Veracity and Uprightness in Mind and Action, without Fraud or Intrusion, filling up every Relation by a perfect Rule. The Superior deals justly towards his Inferior, in his Demands, Rewards, Punishments, Government, Guardianship, &c. Equals behave with Love and Fidelity; performing every Office which their Relation requires; and restraining every Thing which their Relation to each other, naturally forbids. The Inferior acts towards his Superior with Faithfulness, Humility, Submission, and Obedience, according to what the Relation requires. Or, it is a rendering to every one their proper Due, in Rectitude and Sincerity; whether of Love, Honour, Service, Goods, or whatever any One has a Right to claim, or Reason to expect; without usurping Authority to give or take away, to do or prevent, to claim or possess any Thing, but what is equitably One's Due, consistent with what he is, the Station wherein he is fixed, and the Relation in which he stands to every Being.

WHOSOEVER keeps tight to the perfect Rule of Rectitude, is *righteous*; and whosoever swerves therefrom in the least Punctilio, is *unrighteous*. For there is no Gradations in Righteousness: It consists in a perfect Exæternels, in Commensuration with the Standard; to which, he that arrives, can advance

advance no further: And he that falls short, can lay no Claim at all. There may be Gradations in Goodness; where a Person has it in his Power to shew Kindness; no Law obliging him thereto: But this comes not within the Rule of Righteousness, but Beneficence. And sometimes one Person is said to be more righteous than another; Which in Strictness, can only mean, *Less unrighteous*: Being righteous in some Particulars where in the other is culpable; or not guilty of Crimes so enormous. But there may be Degrees of Unrighteousness: For had the unjust Steward wronged his Lord of one Measure, of Wheat or Oil, he had not been righteous: But to wrong him by Twenties and Fifties, was still greater Injustice. --- Righteousness therefore is, a perfect Conformity to an invariable Rule; whereby Right is declared; and Wrong condemned: And where this Conformity is, it is perfect; and where it is not perfect, it is not Righteousness at all.

RIGHTEOUSNESS of Man towards Man, is either the Right of Property, whereby he can lay a just Claim to any Priviledge; as Inheritance, Benefice, Obedience, Reward, Honour, &c. Or, practical Righteousness, whereby he does to others whatever is just, equitable, and reasonable; according to the Place and Relation in which he stands to every Person, and they to him. And it is measured by the Six Commandments of the Second Table; briefly summed up in one; *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself*. Or, *All Things whatsoever ye would that Men should do to you, do ye even so to them*. --- By the former he has a Title to all Benefits, and Enjoyments, which he becomes possessed of by Inheritance, Donation, Purchase, Merit, or any lawful Conveyance: So, that it is a righteous Thing for him to possess that
which

which is his own Property. By the latter he keeps Possession of all his just Rights: For while he does not violate the Law of Equity, against one or other; no Man can justly deprive him of any Part of his Property; Life, Liberty, Treasure, Character, or any Priviledge whatsoever. These are to be strictly regarded, seperately and jointly. The most punctual Observance of every Law of Justice, and Equity, cannot give a Person a Right to any Enjoyment. And the greatest Possessions, claimed by the most indubitable Right; cannot be secure to any Man, unless his Right be preserved by a due Attention to the Laws of Humanity. He must first be righteously possessed of, or intituled to his Enjoyments; and then by a practical Adherence to Justice and Equity, his Property may be righteously secured to him.

RIGHTEOUSNESS of Man in the Sight of God, is either that Right of Donation, whereby they justly claim thole Favours, which God in rich Bounty bestows on them; whether in Creation, Providence, Grace, or Glory: For God makes it a righteous Thing, for every Creature to possess, whatever his good Pleasure gives him to possess. Or, it is that Homage, Resignation, Obedience, Praise, Love, Fear, Reverence, and Devotedness to his Will, and to his Glory; which is due to such a glorious, infinite, perfect, and eternal Being; such a sovereign Governour, and gracious Benefactor. The Righteousness whereby they claim all their Enjoyments, lies only in the Will and Goodness of the Donor. But the Righteousness which God appointed to be the Tenure, whereby all Favours should be held, and a Right to all Benefits maintained; and the Creature preserved from Wrath and Punishment; is a perfect Con-

Conformity to his Holy Law; which equitably requires every Creature to love God, with all the *Heart*, with all the *Soul*, and with all the *Mind*.

THE Righteousness of God, is either Essential, Executive, Donative, Operative, or Communicative.---- His essential Righteousness, is either, That perfect sovereign Right, which he hath over all Creatures; as every Thing proceeded from himself, is dependent on him, and perpetually sustained by him: And therefore he hath such a despotic Authority over every Being, that nothing done by him could be Injustice to any Creature: Nor has any Creature the least Right to ask him, *What dost thou?* Or it is, The Perfection of his Nature; which by Reason of his Unchangeableness, Truth, Faithfulness, Goodness; &c. cannot permit in himself the least Deviation, from those perfect Rules of Justice, which he hath made known to us. For notwithstanding, God is not under any Obligation to his Creatures; nor can be under any Law, respecting his Conduct towards them; yet, having in his Word, laid before us, the Rules of Justice and Equity; with Promises and Threats; he has also bound himself in Faithfulness, to proceed in his Government, and in his Judgment, according to the same Rules which stand approved in his sacred Word. (d) Or rather, in his Word he has made some Discovery to us, of that immutable Perfection of Nature, which is essential to himself; from which he cannot recede.--- His executive Righteousness, is his impartial Judgment. Either between Man and Man; in which God keeps an

(d) *Psal. xcvi. 9.*

exact Account; whether Men be able to trace the Foot-Steps of his Justice, or not. Or, between Creatures and their Creator: Wherein he takes Cognizance of every Thought, Word, and Action; and of the Improvement, or Misimprovement of every Favour, or Opportunity put into their Hands; and renders to every One his proper Due, of Rewards or Punishments, exactly according to their Works. (e)---- His donative Righteousness, is his free Gift to his Creatures: Whereby they have a Right to enjoy, what his Goodness is pleased to bestow. God in Creation, and by immediate Benediction, gave Mankind a Right (or made it a righteous Thing, for him) to govern the animal Part of the Creation, to eat the choice Produce of the Earth, and to enjoy compleat Happiness in that Station. &c. And in his rich Grace, he has given his only-begotten Son to his Church. By which Gift they have an indisputable Right to God as their Father, to *Christ* as their Husband, and to all the Blessings of Grace secured in him; to the Holy Ghost as their Comforter; and to all the Glories of the Kingdom of *Christ*, and of God (f): For the Lord is their Righteousness.---- His operative Righteousness, is that which *Christ* wrought out for his People; in their Place and Stead; as he stood their mediatorial Surety; in his perfect Obedience to the Holy Law, and in suffering vindictive Punishment for their Transgressions. This Righteousness of *Christ*, stands in the Place of that which the Law requires from us, but never was performed by us: But being performed by the Son of God, and imputed to them that believe

(e) *Rom. ii. 6.* (f) *Rom. v. 17.*

they are thereby justified; and stand as inculpable in the Sight of God's Justice, as if they had performed it in their own Persons. (g)--- His communicative Righteousness, is the Infusion of pure Principles into the Heart, or writing the Law of God in the Mind: Whereby *the Righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us*; where the Depravity of Sin had prevailed; and the Soul is purged from those Things which are condemned by the divine Precept. For wheresoever the Righteousness of God's Law is fulfilled in the Soul; Sin is condemned in the Flesh; and the Mind is reconciled to the Law, made to delight therein, and walk conformable thereto. (h) For the Holy Ghost purifieth the Heart by Faith.--- But this Restoration of moral Purity, does not include all the Communications of Grace; but is included therein. For the Holy Ghost, in the Word of his Grace, testifies of God, as the *Father of Glory*; and of *Christ*, and *the Riches of the Glory of his Inheritance in his Saints*; the *Breadth, Length, Depth, and Height of the Love of Christ which passeth Knowledge*; to the filling of the Soul with *all the Fulness of God*. &c. Which is something more than (barely) restoring the human Rectitude: And those spiritual Blessings, which relate to the Excellencies and Glories of the divine Fulness; and lead to the sublime Mysteries of God, and of the Father, and of *Christ*; and do not properly belong to the fulfilling of the Law in us; do still pertain to God's Righteousness. (i) For thereby the Soul receives a Meetness, for the Enjoyment of the Inheritance of the Saints in

(g) *Rom. viii. 33. 34.* (h) *Psal. cxix. 93, 128, 167.*
 (i) *2 Pet. i. 1.*

Light. But whatever Right of Inheritance, Donation, &c. any Person has to any Thing; unless he has a Right of Meetness, and be properly qualified; it is not a righteous Thing to put him in Possession. If a Man be born the undoubted Heir to a Crown; yet, if he be an Idiot, he cannot reign. If *Adam* had not had a Capacity for Government, it could not have been fit for him to have had the Government of the Creation. And if the Heirs of Glory were not made *Partakers of the divine Nature*; superior to all the natural and moral Principles, of which the earthy Man was possessed in his Creation; they could not be fit for the Enjoyment of God in Glory. And what is unfit, is unrighteous. For Righteousness is measured, and determined by a certain Rule; according to the Nature and Fitness of Things.

Now, that Righteousness which God appointed to be the Tenure, whereby we should hold our Standing in his Favour, and be continued in those Enjoyments given us in Creation; is every Man's indispensable Duty. But the Righteousness whereby we became possessed of those Blessings, never was, or was possible to be a Duty: But a free Donation, prior to any Requirement: For it was the Foundation of the Obligation to future Obedience. And notwithstanding our Failure in Obedience could not disannul the Obligation, but it remains perpetual; and whatever was a Duty in our primitive State, will (in Substance) be the same to Eternity: Yet, it could not possibly be our Duty, that *Christ* should redeem us from our Iniquities: Nor that he should fulfil the Righteousness of the Law for us, or in us. This was purely at his own Option. But if he is pleased graciously to do it; it abundantly corroborates the

the Obligation, to live to his Glory. And thro' Union with *Christ*, God's Elect enjoy a Right of Inheritance, as well as a Right of Meetneis, to eternal Glory : Which is a Blessing superior to any Thing that ever was promised, or intimated to *Adam* or any of his Sons ; only in, and thro' *Christ* : Therefore, it must be above the Nature of a Duty. Being according to the Counsel of God's own Will : Of his own Manifestation, and his own Communication. Neither is our Right to these Blessings continued by the Duty or Obedience of Men, like those of the first Covenant. But the Glory is reserved secure in Heaven ; the Grace is a perpetual Fountain residing in *Christ* ; and the Elect are *kept by the Power of God, through Faith unto Salvation*.

THE Grace of Faith, is no other than a vital Communication from, a spiritual Union with, and a gracious Enjoyment of *Christ* : A sovereign Blessing from the God of all Grace : And cannot possibly be the Duty of a created Being. It is not practical Righteousness ; but a Gift of Righteousness : From whence practical Righteousness naturally springs, as from a living Root. And tho' moral Righteousness, and legal Obedience, is the utmost that ever human Purity, or created Holiness did or could produce ; it is not all the Fruit that is produced from a living Faith : Or thro' *Christ* dwelling in the Heart by Faith. For by Faith we are led into the Understanding of those Mysteries, which Angels never knew, till they learned them by the Church : (k) Even the Mysteries which were hid in God. By Faith we receive the Spirit of Adoption, and enjoy the Relation

(k) *Eph.* iii. 10. 1 *Pet.* i. 12.

of Sons; which *Adam* (before his Fall) did not: For he both stood, and fell, and was judged as a Servant. Thro' Faith the Believer is more than a Conquerer, over all Enemies; which *Adam* was not; for he fell before his Enemy. By Faith the Saints enjoy *Christ* as a Husband, strong Consolation in him, and Assurance of an eternal Residence with him: To all which, Man in Innocency was an utter Stranger. Likewise, Faith produces Love of a higher Kind; and advances the Soul to greater Degrees of Godliness. It may be objected, "That what the Law requires from Mankind, is Love with all the *Heart*, *Soul*, and *Strength*: And no Creature in Heaven or Earth can do more." I answer, By Faith the Soul is more enlarged; being brought into a nearer Intimacy with God, than what Man did, or possibly could enjoy in his primeval Purity: For he was unacquainted with *Christ*, the Way to the Father's Bosom. But the Believer being blessed with a nearer Approach, and his Powers abundantly expanded; he loves with a more enlarged, strong, intense Love. An Angel or a Saint in Glory, can but love God with all his Powers: But as his Powers excell those possessed by mortal Beings, so does his Love. (1)

BUT it may be objected, "That we do not come up to the Perfection of the Law: That Love and Obedience is not so steady, under the Grace of Faith, as it was in it's pristine Purity." I answer, The Contest between Grace and Sin, is the Cause of this Irregularity in the Soul. For, from the New-Birth, all the Dissolution of the Body, is the Day of Battle;

(1) *Psal.* ciii. 20. 1 *Cor.* xiii. 12.

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wherein there appears *the Company of two Armies*. For Sin is not yet extirpated; and so far as it retains any Ground, it causes Disturbance. As an Enemy, in a Country where he finds himself overpowered, commonly plundereth and distresseth the Inhabitants; so far as he has Room to ravage; more than while he had the Dominion. So, the Devil finding himself overcome, went down, *having great Wrath*, because he knew he had *but a short Time*. But this is not an Argument, of the Weakness of the Grace of Faith; but of it's invincible Power: And plainly discovers how far it excels the Principle of created Purity. For Nature Purity had Possession of the whole Man; yet, permitted Sin to enter; and never after was able to recover it's Dominion, or make any Resistance. But Sin cast down all moral Virtue to the Ground, and itself ascended the Throne; enslaving all the Powers of Nature; and carrying on the War, or rather, *The Slaughter*; to the utter Extirpation of every Thing that is Good. But the Grace of Faith (that is, *Christ* in his spiritual Influence) finds the Soul under the Dominion of Sin; by irresistible Power takes Possession; carries on the War; and pursues the Victory, to the subduing of the Dominion, and finally extinguishing the Being of Sin: And so shall reign to eternal Life. &c. Hence, there is not the least Appearance, of the Excellency of the Nature Principle, bearing any Comparison, to the Super-excellency of the Grace of Faith. Therefore, as Faith is the Grace; Gift, and Work of God alone; exceeding any Thing that ever came within the Province of Nature; it is superior to any Thing that ever God called a Duty: Whatever Men please to call it.

HOLINESS is a Quality in an individual Person,
or

or Being. And it is either superlative, infinite, immutable, and eternally perfect; in which Sense, none is *Holy* but God: Or it is subordinate and limited, as it may reside in Creatures: And admits of Degrees, and Gradations, from the lowest of all rational Beings, to the brightest Intelligent in the Creation. And as God alone is essentially *Holy*; whatever Holiness pertains to any Creature, is only a Derivation from the Boundless Ocean which is in God.

THE Holiness of God, is too stupendous to be described. The Thought thereof leads to such awful Conceptions, of his most glorious tremendous Majesty; that our Hearts faint, our Tongues fail, and all the Powers of our Souls are dislocated, or absorbed in the transcendent Glories, Beauties, Perfections, and infinite Heights, Depths, Lengths, and Breadths of divine Rectitude, and uncorruptable Purity. Nor can Words express it, or describe what the essential Holiness of God is. For if we would attempt to give a Definition thereof; with the greatest Variety of eloquent Expressions: we must (at last) be obliged to tell you, *It is Holiness*. As the glorious Intelligents before the Throne repeat the same Thing, crying, Holy, Holy, Holy. (m) But to list out our scanty Conceptions as well as we can; we call it, The incomparable Dignity, the incorruptable Pureness, the immutable Excellency, the inexhaustible Riches, the unfading Glory, the infinite Greatness, and ineffable Perfection, of his Nature and divine Attributes. That is, It is himself: It is the incomprehensible God: it is the inconceivable Jehovah: It is the eternal I AM: It

(m) *Isai. vi. 3. Rev. iv. P.*

is the uncreated Essence: The Holy One. Who is infinitely above every Creature; and absolutely separate from all Impurity, Deficiency, or Imperfection whatsoever: And is utterly incapable of Debasement, Mixture, or Declination from the Summit of absolute infinite, and eternal Perfection.

ALL Holiness in Creatures consists in *Nearness* to God. And it is either a divine Bounty; as God in Creation blessed Man with a holy Disposition; or by Consecration, whereby God sanctifies some Persons, or sets them apart to some peculiar Work, Station, or Enjoyment; or by spiritual Communication from the Fullness of *Christ*, whereby there is a perpetual Conveyance of the Grace of Holiness, into their Hearts: Or else it is practical; whereby the Person walks according to the Purity and Excellency of his Nature, and the Dignity of his Station; and manifesteth in his Conversation, those holy Principles with which God has endued him.

PRACTICAL Holiness is a sincere upright walking, consistent to that Purity and Dignity of Nature, with which God has been pleased to bless his Creatures. Whereby those excellent Qualities which God has bestowed, may be maintained in their Perfection: And preserved from being debased, polluted, profaned, or mixed with any Thing which is corrupt, vile, or below the Dignity which God has conferred upon the Person; or appointed him unto. For essential Holiness is not acquirable by any Creature; but being communicated from God to a Creature, for some noble End; it is the Creature's Duty to preserve it. And in some Respects, this is the same with Righteousness: For wherever Holiness in Quality is bestowed, Holiness in Conversation is a reasonable Service. Whatever Excellency God bestowed

bestowed upon any Creature, he design'd it for his own Glory; and has a Right to require it, for the Use to which it was appointed. And for a Creature to profane or debase himself, to spoil that Beauty which God has given him, and to use his Faculties to a contrary End, is Injustice to his Benefactor. God is of purer Eyes than to behold Evil, and cannot look on Iniquity. But every Imbezzlement, or wrong Application of his Benefactions, must be Iniquity in his Sight. For to use the Name of God, his Word, his Worship, &c. in a vain unbecoming Manner, without due Reverence; is a Profanation of that which is sacred to our Creator: And to employ our Minds, Tongues, Bodies, &c. in any Thing impure, base, unclean, or beneath their proper Dignity; is a Profanation of that which is sacred to our Nature, as a noble Part of the Creation. For every Degree of Excellency or Perfection of Nature, which any intelligent Being is possessed of, is Holiness in it's Kind; and a due preserving and improving thereof, is Holiness in Conversation; but every debasing thereof, or Deviation therefrom, is practical Unholiness. Adam was endued with Holiness in his intellectual Powers: From which he swerved, by debasing himself to gratify his sensual Appetite, rather than to glorify his Creator. There is Holiness in the human Nature, above the brutal; which makes the Sin of Bestiality so heinous a Crime: Holiness in the Marriage Relation; which makes Adultery such a Profanation: And Holiness in the Body; which makes Fornication so detestable. So God has given to every rational Creature it's proper Dignity: And Holiness of Conversation is nothing else, but maintaining the Honour of that Station, where God has placed them.

them. (n)

THE Holiness which Man received by Creation was the Work of God in the Composition of his Nature. And it was essential to his Creation; because the Holy God formed him, who cannot do any Thing imperfect: But not essential to his Being, for then he could not have been deprived of it, without Annihilation. It was that Perfection of Rectitude, Goodness, and Purity, in which God was pleased to constitute his Frame. For as he was made an intelligent rational Creature, he must either be holy or unholy; as his active Powers could not be *neutral*, or unoccupied; but either uprightly fixed upon his Creator, or basely declining from him. But it is certain there was no Defect in Man's original Constitution: For the Holy God formed him for his own Pleasure: And the Omniscient God beheld him, and pronounced him *Good*. And doubtless he was a most curiously wrought, excellent, perfect, and compleatly finished Piece. ---- But this Holiness wrought in Creation, subsisted in the earthy Man; and could only be such a *Resemblance* of, and *Nearness* to God, as an earthy Nature was capable of. And Man was made a little lower (therefore his Holiness must be inferior) to the Angels; who *excel in Strength*, and *Wisdom*; stand round the Throne, and *behold the Face of the Father which is in Heaven*; and by Way of Distinction; are honoured with the Title of *Holy Angels*. And yet, Angels are only *ministring Spirits*, to the *Heirs of Glory*; who shall sit down with *Christ* in his Throne: And shall have his Name, and his Father's Name written upon them: And because they excel all

(n) Gen. xvii. 1.

other created Beings; in *Holiness*; they are called in the *Abstract*, SAINTS.

BUT if our Author should be so sanguine (in Favour of his espoused Tenet, "That there can "not be any brighter Image of God, than what "Man was possessed of in his primitive State") to assert, That the Holiness of Man in his Creation, was as excellent as that of the Angels, or Saints in Glory; I hope he will not be so bold, to say, it was equal to the Holiness of *Christ Jesus*. I am very sensible, that Man in his Creation, was as free from Fault, or Pollution, as the holy Angels, or glorified Saints; yea, as *Christ*, as God himself; forasmuch as he was the Handy-Work of God. But God forbid, that I should think any Creature equal to God in Holiness. Every Creature that is possessed of real Righteousness, is as free from Corruption, or Infection, as it is possible for any Creature to be; yea, as God himself is; forasmuch as God's righteous Law can find no Defect in him. Yet, there is an infinite Disproportion in the Dignity, Glory, Excellency, Richness, Preciousness, Goodness, and Perfection of Nature. The meanest Subject (while he avoids breaking the Laws) is as righteous as the King; but not possessed of the same Royalties. A Sparrow, according to it's Nature, may be as free from Imperfection, as any Man can be; and yet, a Man is of more Value than many Sparrows. So, he that is Righteous; no Being can excel in Righteousness: But if it were the Will of God, Millions of Beings might (in so many Degrees) excel one another in Holiness.

BUT the pristine Holiness of Man, was a Quality subsisting in the Creature: And as every Creature is mutable, by Necessity of Nature; whatever Quality subsists in them is perishable,

or

or capable of being lost. And so it came to pass, that Mankind by his own Fault, lost the Holiness of his Nature. And this certainly was the Case of the Angels that fell: For as God was their Creator, it was impossible they should be unholy in their Formation; but being mutable, they became unholy by their own Defect. And as for the Elect Angels; Whether the Holiness they possess, be their native Excellency, by divine Goodness preserved; or it be an immediate Communication from God, thro' *Christ*; is to me a Secret. But whatever is a Quality subsisting in the Constitution of a Creature, must be under Limitation to some certain Measure: And whatever is by immediate Communication from God, must be capable of Advances; according as the Creature is admitted to a greater Nearness of Communion with God. As a Candle whose Light is in itself, is confined to such a Degree of Light as itself is capable of producing; and it's Light may be extinguished. But whatsoever receives it's Light by Reflection, from the Sun; is capable of an Increase, according as the Veils, and interposing Clouds are dissipated; or as it attains nearer Approaches to that luminous Body: Neither can Light thus communicated be extinguished. And it is by Reflection from *Christ*, the Saints expect an Increase of Holiness, (o) while in the Body; and much more when this Tabernacle is dissolved.

HOLINESS of Consecration, is the distinguishing Work of God: In chusing, pointing out, and sanctifying to himself whomsoever he will; as his special Property; or to any other peculiar Use.

(o) 2 Cor. iv. 6, 7.

So it is said to *Israel*, *The Lord hath avouched thee this Day to be his peculiar People.* And particularly, *I have chosen unto me all the First-born of Israel.* Again, God said, *I have taken the Levites from among the Children of Israel, in stead of all the First-born--- therefore the Levites shall be mine.* The *Levites*, God separated to the *holy Service.* And from among them he sanctified *Aaron* and his Sons to the *Priest's Office.* From among the Priests, God sanctified *Jeremiah* and others, to be *Prophets.* Likewise, he chose *Saul, David, Jebu, &c.* to be *Kings.* This was a Holiness of Appointment; whereby those Persons were pitched upon, and selected to those high Stations, or sacred Employments. In the same Manner the Sabbath is holy: Not by Nature, or Communication, but by Appointment. But these were all typical, of the special Consecration of *Christ* and his Church. Wherein God hath chosen, and sanctified to himself, his beloved Son; his *peculiar Delight*: And all his Elect in him to be *Kings and Priests unto God.*

God consecrated, or sanctified his People in *Christ*, from Eternity: In that he chose them in him, that they should be Holy; gave them to his Son; and their Names were written in his Book of Life, before the Foundation of the World. (p) In which holy Appointment, God gave to them, and secured for them in *Christ* the Holiness of special Grace; by spiritual Communication. (q) So that God's Elect were ever lastingly Holy in his Sight; beheld in the Perfection of God's Holy One. God loved them with an everlasting Love: And his Delights were

(p) *Eph. i. 4. Rev. xiii. 8. (q) 2 Tim. i. 5.*

with

with them, before the Formation of any of his Works. (r) But the Holy God cannot delight in any Thing that is unholy: For tho' he loves those Persons who are Sinners; and loves them while in their Sins (otherwise they would never be saved from their Sins) God does not, nor ever did; nor ever can love Sinners. As Sinners he may pity them, but cannot love them as such. He loves them only as they are sanctified in Christ. (s) Christ also sanctified himself; or devoted himself to be a Sacrifice for his People, that they might be sanctified in him: or, *That he might sanctify the People with his own Blood.*--- *He appeared to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself.*--- *For by one Offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.* For by his atoning Blood Sin is blotted out, and purged away; all Wrath, Curse, and Condemnation is removed; and a Way is opened to the Throne of Grace. And now in Christ Jesus, *they that were far off, are made nigh by the Blood of Christ.* Thus, they whose Sins (in Justice) held them at the utmost Distance, are brought to stand in a *Holy Nearness* to their heavenly Father. And when this Holy Blood of the Holy Lamb, is by the Holy Gospel, through the Power of the Spirit of Holiness, manifested in the Conscience; it purgeth it from Guilt and Pollution; giving the Soul Boldness in the Presence of God; sanctifying the Affections to delight in God; strengthening the Heart to trust in the Righteousness of Christ; and graciously inclining the Soul to wait for, and obediently to follow the Lord Jesus. (r) But the Sanctification

(r) Jer. xxxi. 3. Prov. viii. 22—31. (s) Eph. i. 6. (t) Heb. ix. 14.

of Atonement and Consecration; or a spotless Presentation of the Elect unto God, in the offering up of *Christ* for them; is prior to the Application and sanctifying Influence of this Blood in the Conscience.---- Likewise the Holy Ghost consecrates the Children of God by the Word of Grace. Calling them out of the World, separating them from all other People, and distinguishing them by his special Anointings, as Sons of God, and Heirs of Glory. (u) They are sealed with the Signet of their Father's Kingdom, being made Kings and Priests to their God: Therefore they *dwell alone*, and are no more *reckoned among the Nations*. But this Branch of Consecration, or special Separation, is accomplished by the Communication of spiritual Grace; whereby all the Powers of the Mind are sanctified unto God.

HOLINESS of Grace, or intrinsic Holiness in a Believer; is not that native Rectitude in which he was created: Which being lost, is not to be restored; for it *decayeth, waxeth old, and vanisheth away*. But it is a new incorruptible Seed, or vital Principle communicated from *Christ*, the living Head; from whom every Member receives Life. (w) He is the Fountain of divine Fulness, which filleth All in all: And thro' a spiritual Union with him; all his Elect receive of his Fulness, *and Grace for Grace*. As the Head conveys Influence to the Body, the Vine sends forth Sap and Virtue into the Branches, or the Sun communicates Light and Heat to the World. For God hath said, *I will dwell in them, and walk in them. Christ liveth in his Church; which is the Temple of the Holy Ghost*. And this Principle of Ho-

(u) *Deut. xiv. 2. 2 Cor. vi. 14—18. (w) Col. iii. 4*

Holiness, Grace of Faith, or Life of *Christ* in the Soul; is a *Well of Water, springing up into everlasting Life*. Therefore, that Holiness which dwells in the Believer, is nothing less than the perpetual Influx of divine Life, from *Christ Jesus*: Or, the powerful Influence of efficacious Grace, transforming the Soul into the Image of the Son of God: Or, a *Nearness* of spiritual Union, producing a *Nearness* of Resemblance, to the Holy One of God. Nor is it subject to any Rule, whereby it can be measured: Only the good Pleasure of God's own Will.

For it is the very same in Specie, with that by which their Happiness and Enjoyment of God, shall be consummated in eternal Glory. And the same Spirit of Holiness, which now dwells in the Souls of Believers, shall quicken their Bodies at the last Day. (x) And according to the *Nearness* of Approach, which God is pleased to make to his People, or permit them to himself (whether by Faith now, or in Vision hereafter) their Holiness will increase. (y) Forasmuch as their Holiness is nothing else but Enjoyment of, and Likeness to their heavenly Father. And this vital spring cannot possibly perish or decay; for it has *Christ* for it's Supply: Who is *the same yesterday, and to day, and forever*. He is the Christian's Life, of Righteousness, Peace, Comfort, Hope, and eternal Glory: Upon every one of which, he has written; *Because I live, ye shall live also*. Therefore, this Holiness cannot be lost: Because it is not a Quality inherently subsisting in a mutable Creature. but immediately proceeding from the *immutable God*. It cannot be confined to any

(x) *Rom. viii. 11.* (y) *1 Job. iii. 2.*

Measure, because it flows from an *infinite Fountain*. It cannot come within the Latitude of a Creature's Duty, because it is a *sovereign Bounty*, above all Laws, Duties, Requirements, or Obligations whatsoever. And it cannot fail to bring forth *Fruit*, because the Fulness of God is the *Root* thereof. Intrinsic Holiness is certain to produce practical Holiness: A vital Spring must yield a pure Stream. For tho' the Cistern (the earthly Man) fail'd, and dried up; the eternal Fountain (the Lord from Heaven) can never be exhausted. Nor fail to produce Streams of Love, Gratitude, and Holiness of Conversation. (2)

ALL the rich Grace that springs from God the Father, flows through the Son, and descends by the Holy Ghost, upon God's Elect; is pure Holiness. And (while they are in the Body) the Communication is alone by Faith. Faith and Holiness (residing in the Soul) is one and the same Thing. But under other Considerations they greatly differ: Holiness being of a much larger Extent. For tho' Faith in all it's Streams and Branches, is included in Holiness; for it is nothing else but a Ray thereof: Yet, all Holiness cannot be included in Faith. Holiness includes all that is in God: in himself, it is his own *Essence* proceeding from him to his Church, it is *Grace* taking Place in the Soul, it is *Faith*; incircling the Saints in Heaven, it is *Glory*. Thus the Holiness, which in the World to come, shall immediately shine forth in open Vision; is the very same Thing which the Saints (now) enjoy by Faith: For it is God, in *Christ*, by the Spirit of Holiness. Only it is manifested through a denser

(2) *Rom. viii. 10.*

Medium: *We see through a Glass darkly.* As the Glory of the Sun appears in the Aurora, by Reflection of the Atmosphere: But by and by, the very same Glory shines forth in it's meridian Refulgency. Or, as the Seed within the Earth, receives the Moisture of the Rain, and Warmth of the Sun Beams; through the Earth, whereby it is covered: But when it is sprung up to an open Plant, the very same Blessings fall immediately upon it. But when we confine our Ideas to the present Blessings, and Operations of God in the Soul; Holiness, Grace, Faith, Spiritual Life, the Image of *Christ*, and Communion with God; are (in Substance) all one and the same Thing. But in Condescension to our narrow Conceptions, the Holy Ghost has been pleased to give us the same Things in a diversity of Expressions; the better to inculcate them into our Understandings. And tho' in some Respects we may distinguish, and conceive a real Difference in these Things; they are so far *One*, as they are absolutely inseparable. And they are all Blessings of heavenly Extraction, and never did move in so low a Region as that of Duty, or Law Requirements.

FOURTHLY, Salvation and Adoption.

SALVATION is Deliverance, either from a present Evil, or an apparent Danger: And always supposes Misery, either felt or feared: Which by the Salvation is prevented, or actually put away; so as for the Person to escape. Sometimes Salvation is immediate, and sometimes gradual: Sometimes compleat and full, sometimes only in Part: Sometimes perpetual, and sometimes only for a certain Period: Sometimes it is wrought entirely by the Hand of the Deliverer, and sometimes by his Assistance, joining the Endeavours of the dis-

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stressed Person. And it is esteemed great or small; according to the Degree of the Distress, the Difficulties to be overcome, and the Degree of the Deliverance itself; both as to the present Safety, and the Duration of it. Salvation includes whatsoever belongs to Deliverance; or setting free, from present, or future Evil: In whatever Light it can be understood. And this is the full Extent thereof; nothing more is, or can be included in Salvation.

It is true, The Person who is a Saviour, may also be a Benefactor; not only saving from Misery, but also loading with Favours. *Joseph* saved the Lives of the *Egyptians*, in giving them Food, as well as his Brethren; but obtaining for his Brethren an Inheritance in the Land of *Goshen*, was an additional Act of Bounty. God brought *Israel* out of *Egypt* as a Saviour: But he gave them the Land of *Canaan*, as a faithful Performer of his own Promise, made to their Fathers long before their Bondage. God might have given them the Possession, whether they had ever been in Thralldom or not: Or he might have delivered them from *Pharoah*, whether he had ever promised the Land or not. The one was a Work of Salvation; the other a rich Donation: Two distinct Things; bearing no Relation, the one to the other; only in this Contingency; That, had there been no Deliverance, the Bondage must have prevented the Enjoyment: As they could not be in one Place, and in another at the same Time. For, to set free from Calamity, and secure the Person in all his former Enjoyments, is the utmost Extent of Salvation: But to advance him to a Station superior to what he ever possessed before; is a Benefit of a higher Nature; at least of a distinct Kind: And bears

bears no proper Relation at all to the Salvation. Only, as it may be said of him that prevents the Execution of a Malefactor, or saves any Person's Life; (in an improper Sense;) he gives him all the Favours that he enjoys all his Life after: Because, had he lost his Life, all Enjoyments had been excluded. But the Truth is, He bestows no Benefit, only prevents Destruction; whereby the Person is preserved in a Capacity to enjoy whatsoever the Providence of God has blessed him with, or may afford him for the future. And if any rich Favours be further conferred upon the wretched Object; whether by him that saved his Life, or by any other Person; it is by an Act distinct from Salvation.

In the Salvation of God's Elect, three Things are to be considered.

1, THE Evil to be saved from, is Sin. Whose Root is a departing from the living God: Which naturally merits eternal Banishment from the Presence of the Lord (a); consequently makes it impossible for the Creature to approach to any Blessedness. Its shooting forth is Rebellion against the Almighty: Which naturally merits the eternal Vengeance of God (b); and renders it impossible for the Sinner to escape the most exquisite and endless Torments. Its Ripeness is an Abyss of Corruption, Putrefaction, Filthiness, and Abomination; filling all the Faculties of the Mind, and polluting all the Members of the Body: Which naturally sinks the Soul into a bottomless Deep of Misery (c); and renders the Creature utterly incapable, or makes it impossible

(a) 2 *Thess.* i. 9. (b) *Rev.* xiv. 10, 11. (c) *Isa.* lvii. 20.

for him, in the Nature of Things, to enjoy any true Felicity. Therefore, the Sinner is righteously deprived of every Blessing, irreversibly sentenced to every Woe, and inevitably lost, without Remedy, and without Hope. (d)

2, SALVATION from this wretched Condition, must be an absolute, perfect, and eternal Deliverance; from all the deserved Wrath, experienced Depravity, and expected Misery, proceeding from Sin. Which requires ample Satisfaction to the Justice of God, Honour done to the Holy Law, Redemption from the Curse, and Justification from all Condemnation: Or the Person to be made as perfectly righteous in the Sight of God, as if he had never sinned. It also requires, that the Soul should be set at Liberty from the Bondage, and Dominion of Sin; and the Heart purified from all the Corruption, and defiling Nature of Sin: So as the Soul may walk before God with as much Freedom, love him with as much Sincerity, and appear before him with as much Innocency, as if Sin had never infected the Mind. And it requires Deliverance from all the Effects of Sin; whether Guilt of Conscience, Anguish of Mind, Pain of Body, Persecutions from Men, Temptations from *Satan*, or Death itself: So as they may be perfectly free from all Grief, and all Fear; from within, or from without; from Heaven, Earth, or Hell; respecting Time, or Eternity. (e)

3, THE Saviour, by whom this Deliverance is accomplished, is God alone: Without the Concurrence of any Creature. For the *Depth* of the Misery, none can reach, but the *everlasting Arms*:

(d) *Eph.* ii. 12. (e) *Isa.* xlv. 17.

And the *Perfection* of the Redemption, none can touch, but the *infinite Jehovah*. The Foundation was laid in the eternal Counsels of God the Father, the Work was compleat in his unchangeable Purposes, and secured in the Stipulations of the everlasting Covenant, before the World began. The Work was laid upon *Christ* in his surety Engagements, before the Foundation of the World: By him the great Propitiation, Atonement was made, Sin was taken away, and everlasting Righteousness brought in, when he appeared on the Earth: By him the great High Priest, who appears now in the Presence of God, for his Church; pleading for them, the Virtue of his own Blood; their Cause is honourably maintained, and their Persons accepted, before the Throne of God. The Sanctification of their Hearts, the cleansing of their Consciences, and purging away the Filth of Sin; is the Work of God the Spirit; who searches out all the hidden Secrets of the Heart, penetrates into all the deep Recesses of the Soul, discerning the Intent of every Thought, and discovering the lurking Place of every sinful Imagination; and who having *begun a good Work* in his Children, *will perform it until the Day of Jesus Christ*. The compleat Deliverance of Soul and Body, from all the Effects of Sin, shall be finished by the Lord *Jesus*, in the Resurrection; when he shall *appear the second Time, without Sin, unto Salvation*. Thus, Salvation is one perfect System, called, *The Salvation of God*.

THEREFORE, whatsoever belongs to eternal Salvation, cannot possibly come within the Limits, or consist with the Nature of Duty. The Work of God, and the Work of a Creature, can not commix together. It is the Work of God,
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to qualify Creatures for the Performance of Duties; and it is the Duty of Creatures, to perform all God's Requirements, to the utmost of the Capacity that God has given them. But whatsoever is God's Work, cannot (in the Nature of Things) be any Man's Duty. Nor is there any such Thing, in Nature or in Grace, as any proper Work of God, being required of, or performed by any Creature. It is the Duty of Man, to keep the Law in it's utmost Perfection; which he cannot now attain to, having lost his primitive Purity; and it is alone by the Grace of Salvation, that his Uprightness can be restored, to the Performance of new Obedience: But it is not the Grace of Salvation, but the keeping of the Law, which is required as the Creature's Duty. And if there be any Kind of Salvation, which is the Creature's proper Duty; as, to save themselves from evil Practices, or from an evil Generation; &c. This is no Branch of *eternal Salvation*; but the Consequence thereof.

THAT Faith which is worthy to be called *Saving Faith*, is worthy to be called the *Work*, and *Grace* of God: And whatsoever is worthy to be ascribed to God, as his special Grace; is not to be debased so low, as the Duty or Performance of a Creature. It is true, All the good Works of God's People, are justly ascribed to God; as the Fruits of his Grace: But not as his Performances. And would this be good Reasoning; viz. It is our Duty to keep the Law: but we cannot keep it without the Grace of God: Therefore, it is our Duty to have the Grace of God? We cannot do it without the Work of God in our Hearts: Therefore, it is our Duty to do the Work of God in our Hearts? We cannot do it unless we be new Creatures: There-

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fore it is our Duty to make ourselves new Creatures? Or, it is my Duty to walk uprightly before God: But I am fallen into Sin; and cannot perform my Duty, unless God is pleased to raise me up: Therefore, it is my Duty, for God to raise me up? Let the Reader judge!

IF Faith be the Grace from whence Obedience proceeds, it is not the Obedience itself: And if it be the Performance of a Creature, it is not the Grace from whence that Performance springs. If it be a Branch of Salvation, or saving Grace, it is a Blessing given, and not a Duty required. But if it be a Work of the Creature, it is not properly the Gift of God; but a Fruit required, in Consequence of some other Benefit bestowed. But the Faith of God's Elect is a divine Blessing, proceeding thro' *Christ Jesus*, by the Operation of the Holy Spirit; a special Branch of Salvation: And therefore, it is of a Nature specifically different from any Kind of Duty.

ADOPTION is the Relation in which God's Elect stand to their Heavenly Father; in their mystical, spiritual, and Glory Union, with the *only begotten*, and *first-born* Son of God. Adoption must proceed from God alone, and must first exist in his eternal Bosom; in his Love to, Delight in, and full Acceptance of his People in *Christ*; as his own Sons and Daughters. It is inseparable from Election, and scarce distinguishable from it. Only as our scanty Conceptions must receive Things by little and little; Election conveys an Idea of distinguishing Love; Adoption conveys an Idea of embracing Love. In this Sense, God's Elect were Sons, before he had called them by his Grace. *Bring my Sons from far, and my Daughters from the Ends of the Earth.---- Other Sheep I have which are not of this Fold: them also*

I must bring.--- That also he should gather together in one, the Children of God that were scattered abroad. The Manifestation, and Comfort of this Relation, is by the Spirit of Adoption; whereby the Soul finds Freedom, and Access into the Presence of God; and Boldness to call him *Father*: Or enters into that Nearness to, and spiritual Enjoyment of God, to which he is predestinated. (f) The glorious Dignity to which the Children of God are intitled, through this Relation; will appear at the last Work of Redemption; to wit, the Resurrection of the Body. (g) Therefore, it is a near, a honourable, and eternally standing Relation, between God and his People: In which, the Lord *Jebovah* is their Father; *Jesus Christ* is their Husband; and they are *Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Christ*.

ADOPTION is the Source of all the peculiar Blessings which the People of God enjoy, in Time or Eternity: And Salvation is the Fruit of adopting Grace. For Salvation became necessary through Sin; as a Matter of Pity, Mercy, and Compassion to miserable Objects. But the Fountain from whence that Compassion springs, and unmeasurably flows beyond all Bounds; is that spontaneous Love, wherewith God loved his People in *Christ*; the first and chief Delight of his Soul. Not proceeding from any comprehensive Motive, Necessity, or accidental Cause; but solely from *The Counsel of his own Will*. Without any Regard to any Thing foreseen in the Creature, Good or Evil, Sin or Righteousness; or any Thing without himself; but, *According to his eternal Purpose which he purposed in himself*. And

(f) *Rom. viii. 15. Gal. iv. 5, 6. Eph. i. 5, 6. (g) Rom. viii. 23.*

this independent Love and Grace of God, is given as the Reason of his Mercy, in extending Salvation to his People. *But God, who is rich in Mercy, for his great Love wherewith he loved us:--- And I lay down my Life for the Sheep:--- As Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it. --- Forasmuch then as the Children are Partakers of Flesh and Blood, he also himself likewise took Part of the same. &c.* Hence observe, the unoriginated Love of God; and the Relation in which his People stand; his Sheep, his Church, his Children; &c. is put antecedent to; and laid down as the Cause of their Salvation. The Apostle first says, *Christ is the Head of the Church*; and then tells us, *He is the Saviour of the Body*. Again; *And because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*

THIS unchangeable Love of God the Father; to *Christ* and his Church, Election of *Christ*, and his Church in him; Sonship of *Christ*, and his Church, in Union with him; the indissolvable Union, between the mystical Vine and the Branches; and the infinite Fullness residing in *Christ*; for the eternal Supply of all his Members; must (in some Respects) be more extensive than Salvation: Inasmuch as it is the Fountain from whence Salvation springs.

1. To speak after the manner of Men: It appears to bear a more early Date. For nothing could be done or determined, concerning Salvation, but in consideration of Sin foreseen: But the very primigenious Existence of God's Elect, was in their Father's Love. *Lord, thou hast been our Dwelling Place in all Generations.* There was a Generation of Creatureship, in the pure Mass; while Sin was not, and Salvation could not have any Concern: But the Church (then) dwelt in

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Christ, and Christ in God. For Salvation could not be prior to the *Depths of Sin*, in God's Sight; but Wisdom says of God the Father, *Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his Delight, rejoicing always before him: Rejoicing in the habitable Part of his Earth, and my Delights were with the Sons of Men.* Which he declares to be, *In the Beginning of his Way.*--- *When there were no Depths.* We cannot form any Conceptions of a Succession of Time in God, or in any of the Counsels of his immutable Will. But in Order of Nature, the eternal Ocean of Love and Grace, must be prior to the Springs of Mercy that proceed therefrom; in the Fore-ordination of *Christ*, to be the Sacrifice, Redeemer, Justifier, and Saviour of his People. Love is essential to the Being of God: *God is Love.* And this is the Root of all Blessings, to God's Elect: But it is impossible that Mercy should exist in the open Branch, without the Consideration of Misery. Therefore, we cannot form any just Conceptions of Mercy, in those deep everlasting Counsels, Purposes, and Covenant Settlements of God, for the Salvation of his elect Sons; but as succeeding (if I may use the Word) the deeper Counsels of Love, in electing and adopting Grace

2, *HEREIN*, the Elect stand in a nearer Relation to *Christ*, than they could be brought into by meer Mercy, in Salvation. For Salvation is only Deliverance from Sin, and it's dreadful Effects: Whereby we lost the Station of Servants, were banished from God as Aliens, to be punished as Rebels: And a Restoration to our former Estate, is the utmost Extent of saving Mercy. For how far soever Goodness may extend, or Benefits flow; it is not Mercy or Salvation, any further than it stands in Opposition to Misery. But by

Adoption

Adoption they are *Sons of God*, and *Heirs of eternal Glory*, the *Spouse of Christ*, *Members of his Body*, of his *Flesh and of his Bones*.

3, HEREBY they enjoy more immediate Communion with God, than could have been procured by Salvation only. For suppose them brought back to their *Eden-State*, where God was pleased to make a visible Appearance, and hold audible Conversation with Man; This was far inferior to those internal Enlargements, spiritual Manifestations of Love, and that vital Communion, which the Saints enjoy by the Holy Ghost dwelling in them. *But ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.---- And truly our Fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.--- And he that keepeth his Commandments, dwelleth in him, and he in him.---- Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.*

4, IN Consequence of the Relation of Sonship, their Natures are dignified, above any Thing that could have been attained by the Work of Salvation. For had they been blessed with an ample Restoration, from all Imperfection; it could only have re-established them, in the Rectitude of their earthly Nature. But through Union with *Christ*, they are *Partakers of the divine Nature*. And shall be made spiritual and glorious like himself. For in Creation, they had the Nature Image of *Christ* in their Formation; or stamped upon them by Impression; as a Piece of Workmanship. But thro' vital Union, they receive his Grace and Glory Image; by immediate Communication. As the Moon receives the Image of the Sun, by the Glory of his Rays shining upon her: Or as a Glass receives the Image of a Person, by his

looking thereon; which the more he draws near, the more clear and conspicuous will the Image be. So, it is *By beholding* (the Excellency of *Christ*) that the Saints are *changed into the same Image, from Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*--- *When he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*

5, THERE is not (in the Bible) the least Appearance, of any such Thing, as eternal Glory, either in Possession or in Promise, to Man in his upright Nature State. For Man was made lower than the Angels. And whatever his Misery (by Sin) is; Salvation is equally extensive, without Enlargement or Diminution; and could neither place him higher nor lower than his native Original. But the *Bride, the Lamb's Wife*, is advanced far above the Angels: For she shall sit down with *Christ, her Husband*, in his Throne; whereas the Angels possess no higher Station, than to stand in waiting around the Throne. God saith of his Elect, *The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting Light, and thy God thy Glory.*--- *Thou shalt also be a Crown of Glory in the Hand of the Lord, and a royal Diadem in the Hand of thy God.*--- *They shall see his Face; and his Name shall be in their Foreheads.*--- *And they shall reign for ever and ever.*

THUS, by Adoption, and Union with the Son of God; the Church is advanced as far above her primitive State, in the first *Adam*; as what she sunk below it by Sin. By Creation we were fixed in a State of earthly Perfection. By Sin we lost it, and sunk down to the Deeps of Hell. By Salvation we have full Deliverance, from all Misery and Ruin. By Adoption we have a Title to the Crown of Glory, *eternal in the Heavens.* So that were these Things to be separately considered; Adoption as far exceeds Salvation, as Sal-

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vation exceeds Damnation. For whatever tends to our Deliverance from Sin and Misery, properly belongs to Salvation: But whatever tends to our Promotion into a higher Station than what we possessed in the first *Adam*; has no immediate Relation to Salvation; but properly belongs to Adoption. Whatever Blessing is earthly, natural, or any Part of the human Perfection, or was possessed by Man before his Fall; was lost by Sin. But Blessings of spiritual Grace, and heavenly Glory; were never lost, nor restored; but secured unalienable in *Emmanuel*: And conferred upon God's Elect, in the Time appointed of the Father. According to the *Fellowship of the Mystery, which from the Beginning of the World, hath been hid in God.*--- But now is made manifest to his Saints.

BUT notwithstanding Adoption and Salvation are in themselves properly distinct, they are not separate, so as for a fallen Sinner to enjoy the one without the other. For as the rich Grace of Adoption knows no other Source, Cause, nor Motive; but the eternal, infinite, immutable Bosom of Jehovah; it must contain an absolute Immediacy of Goodness. From whence every needful, as well as every desirable Blessing must incessantly flow. Therefore, since the Sons of God by Adoption, have made themselves Servants of Sin, and Subjects of Misery, by Transgression; it is impossible this bottomless Ocean of paternal Love should be restrained from sending forth a boundless Stream of Salvation, to deluge over all their Sin and Misery. Thus Salvation is included in the Grace of Adoption: And cannot possibly spring from any other Fountain.---- I cannot conceive any Reason, according to the original Constitution of Things; why Grace and Glory might not have taken Place upon God's Elect,

according to his everlasting Love in Adoption; supposing Sin, or Salvation has never had a Being. For Sin, in it's own Nature, cannot possibly be of any Use to any Being. It is what God hates. And it is what makes every Creature miserable, where it takes Place. And Sin alone made Salvation needful: Without which no Salvation could have been. But as Things now stand with fallen Creatures; the other Blessings of Adoption can take no Place, unless they bring Salvation along with them. As a Prince having betrothed a Damsel to Wife; may bring her to his Palace, endow her with his Riches, and enthrone her in his Grandeur: Without paying any Ransom for her; provided she be free: Without applying any Medicine to her; provided she be in Health. But in Case of Debt, Imprisonment, Sicknes; &c. he cannot manifest his Love, nor make her happy; without providing Deliverance from all the Evils, whereby she is distressed. Which delivering Goodness, is included in, and proceeds from his spontaneous Love, and conjugal Union. So, our Sin and Misery, has given Occasion to our Heavenly Father, Husband, and unchanging Friend; to display (in our Salvation) the Riches of that Love and Grace, which is essential to himself. *(b) Hereby perceive we the Love of God, because he laid down his Life for us.*

THE Grace of God, when understood in it's largest Extent, includes all his Goodness to his Church, from Eternity to Eternity. But it hath it's particular Acceptations, according to what Subject may be under Consideration. The Grace of God, in the Love and Good-Will which he

(b) Rom. v. 20, 21.

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hath in himself, towards his Elect; includes all his Counsels and Purposes, concerning their eternal Salvation: But it is not therein included. For God hath also purposed and promised Things which Eye never saw, nor Ear ever heard, or ever entered the Heart of Man. The Grace of God, in his Works wrought for his People; includes all the Undertakings, and Performances of *Christ*, for their Deliverance from Sin and Misery; but is not included therein: For *Christ* performs many Things, properly relating to the Kingdom of eternal Glory, where Sin and Misery never came. The Grace of God, in his Communications of spiritual Life to the Soul; which considered as a special Enjoyment, blessing and enriching the Soul, is the self same with precious Faith; this includes all internal Salvation from the Dominion and Pollution of Sin; but is not included therein: For the Saints hereby enjoy a Revelation of those Mysteries which were kept secret from the Foundation of the World. So far as pertains to Deliverance from Sin, Guilt, and Fear; receiving the Comfort of Atonement, Peace, and Remission of Sins thro' the Blood of *Christ*; apprehending Deliverance from Condemnation, Death, and Hell, by the Lord our Righteousness; spiritual Conviction of Sin, Repentance from dead Works, and Purity of Conscience. &c. These are Blessings of Mercy; and do properly belong to Salvation. But what pertains to the Elevation of the Soul, into the sublime Mysteries of God, as a Father; Union with *Christ* as a Husband, and being joint Heirs together with him; the Communion of the Holy Ghost, abiding in the Soul forever; with a certain Hope of being made like the Son of God, and blessed with the Enjoyment, and open Vision of his Glory; in the

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refulgent Rays of Light, and vital Streams, of Love; *proceeding out of the Throne of God, and of the Lamb.* These are Blessings superior to any Thing that was enjoyed in a State of Innocency: And never could be lost, or regain'd: And can have no direct Relation to Salvation: But adopting Love, and sovereign Grace. That internal Principle of Purity with which *Adam* was endued was inherent in his Nature; therefore it fell with him: But the spiritual Grace, or Life of Faith, which the Saints enjoy, is not inherent in themselves: But a glorious Ray of divine Life, shining into their Hearts, *in the Face of Jesus Christ.* And this efficacious Grace, whereby all the Powers of the Soul are kindled into a heavenly Flame; proceeds from *Christ* himself; to his own Sheep; not as miserable, but beloved Objects.

Wherefore, If this precious Faith be a Creature's Duty; it is his Duty to BE, what God never made him: TO ENJOY, what God never bestowed upon him: And to BEHOLD, a Glory which God never discovered to him: For if it be required of the Creature, as his Performance; then a natural Man is required to make himself a spiritual Man: A Servant is bound to make himself a Son: An earthy Creature is obliged to make himself a heavenly Being: A Creature whom God fixed in the Centre of Nature's Enjoyments, is required to translate himself into the Kingdom of Grace and Glory: And a Creature in whom God never planted any Thing, of a higher Quality than meer Nature; nor ever gave him a Capacity to understand, or receive any Blessing of a superior Kind; is commanded, to fill himself with the Fulness of God.

If it be said, "It was not asserted to be Man's Duty, to do these Things himself." I reply,

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And to assert it to be his Duty, to make God to do it for him; would be full as absurd. But if it be said, "It is only asserted to be a Duty, without determining which Way, or by what Power." Then it is only an *Ignis fatuus*, to lead us into the Dark. But if it be said, "God offers his Grace and his Assistance; and it is the Creature's Duty to accept, and join with him in the Work." I answer, This would not be the Thing; for the Master, under Consideration is *saving Faith*. But offered Grace may be refused, thro' a stubborn Disposition; and that which does not save a Soul from it's Stubbornness cannot be *saving Grace*, or *saving Faith*. Beside, If a sinful Creature must be a Co-operator; so much of the Work as was performed by him, would be corrupt: For all work will resemble the Workman. So far as a mortal Creature had any Hand in it, the Work would be perishable. And whatever can possibly receive any Assistance, from a natural earthy Man; can never be of a spiritual heavenly Nature.

OBJECTION. "It is not the highest Attainments of Faith, but the Being of it, which is the Thing in Question."

ANSWER. The Essence of Faith is nothing less than the Life of *Jesus* in the Soul. And where it is in the smallest Degree; it is of the same Nature with that which fills the Saints in Glory. For it *shall be in him a Well of Water springing up into everlasting Life*. A Man of Stature has no other Nature, but the very same which he had when conceived in the Womb. Nor has a Saint in Glory any other Nature, than what he received in his Regeneration: From the first, he had Life from *Christ*; and now he has it *more abundantly*. The first Communication of Faith into the Soul;

is a new Creation: And if it be the Duty of a Child to create itself; it must be his Duty to grow to his appointed Stature. For the Difference between the most polished unregenerate Man, and the weakest Believer upon Earth; is greater, than between the weakest Heaven-born Soul that breathes, and the most glorified Saint in the Courts above.

If it be objected, "That I represent this Grace in too strong a Light: That Gospel Figures are to be taken in a qualified Sense. &c."

I ASK, What is the Meaning of many of Christ's own Words? *As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: So he that eateth me, even he shall live by me:---- At that Day ye shall know, that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.---- As thou Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us:---- I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.---- That the Love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them. --- He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his Belly shall flow Rivers of living Water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him, should receive.---- But ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.--- Which were born, not of Blood nor of the Will of the Flesh, nor of the Will of Man, but of God.* Is it Enthusiasm, to understand a certain, substantial, spiritual Signification in his gracious Words? Or, Is it being Strangers to the experimental vital Power thereof, that causes Persons to expound the Substance into a Vapour? If it be said, "Faith is only one particular Branch of Grace."

I ANSWER, If it be above the Nature of a Duty to create a Man: How will it become a Duty to create a Hand, a Heart, or an Eye? But tho'

tho' some particular Branch of Grace, or Fruit of the Spirit, is frequently called Faith; this does not prove that Faith is confined to that single Fruit. As we commonly ascribe to a Man, that Work, which was actually done by one of his Fingers: But this is not an Argument, that the whole Man is no more but one Finger: But that the Finger is actuated by the same Power, as the whole Body. And if we duly observe, what is spoken in the Word of God, concerning Faith, both in general, and in Particulars; it is easy to see, that Faith includes the whole Life of Grace. Every spiritual Enjoyment is only a Branch of it: And every spiritual Quality or Disposition of Mind, is only a Fruit of it. Therefore the Apostle says, *The Life which I now live in the flesh (i. e. his whole spiritual Life) I live by the Faith of the Son of God.* And for the Ephesians, he prays, *That Christ (in whom all Fulness dwells) may dwell in your Hearts by Faith. --- Therefore it is of Faith, that it might be by Grace.*

BUT if it be objected, " That all this Fulness was in the human Nature before the Fall: And therefore the Grace of *Christ*, amounts to no more than a Restoration of that which once was enjoyed, but had been lost: And is our Duty to perform."

I ASK, Where is it recorded? From what Part of Scripture may it be gathered? Or, What is to be found in all the Bible, that may give us the least Reason to conceive, that *Adam* had any such Grace in Possession, or Glory in Promise?--- If *Adam* had this spiritual Life and Grace in himself; as a Head and Fountain; capable of conveying it to his Posterity; instead of being made a little lower than the Angels, he had been equal to the King of Angels; the Lord from Heaven.

And if so, how came he to be overcome by a fallen Angel? Or, What Ground have we to hope, that we shall not suffer the same Fate in *Christ*, as we did in *Adam*? But if *Adam* enjoyed it in the Furnels of *Christ*, it must be by a vital Union with, and spiritual Communication from him. The Preservation whereof must have depended upon God alone; and could not possibly be made dependent on the Creature. And so it would have been *Christ*, that lost *Adam*, and not *Adam* that lost himself. The Saints in *Christ*, have no Dependence at all upon their own power, for Preservation, but upon the omnipotent Hand of the Son, and the Father. (1) And if it was the same Union with *Christ*, and the same Grace; which was once broken, and lost; what Ground can we have, to expect it, should be permanent for the future? Then it is uncertain, whether one Believer shall preserve to the End: Or whether one glorified Saint shall keep his Station: For that power which fail'd once, may fail again.

BUT *Adam* had not the same Grace of God, in *Christ*: For it was a Mystery hid in God, and had not been revealed to any Creature, at that Period. And the spiritual Grace of *Christ*, or the Life of Faith, cannot be enjoyed without a Revelation of, spiritual Union to, experimental Communion with, and vital Communication from the Son of God. *Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you.* Therefore, whatever Perfections dwelt in *Adam*, they could not be of the same Nature with the Life of Faith: They were only mortal Qualities, inherent in the *Essence of Nature*; and not Streams of

(1) *John* 18, 29.

Grace

Grace, from the *Fountain of Life*. And if the *living Soul* was endowed with the same Qualities as the *quickening Spirit*; and the *Man* of the Earth, *earthly*, possessed of the same Perfections as the *Lord from Heaven*; then there is no specific Difference, between *natural* and *spiritual, earthly* and *heavenly* Things. And thus, *Adam* and *Christ*, must form an Equality. For, according to this System; either *Adam* must be a God; or *Christ* must not be any more than a Creature. And so farewell to all the Christian's Hope! But blessed be the God and Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, who has not left us to sink upon such a sandy Foundation! The Apostle *Paul* makes a specific Difference, distinctly states the Case, strongly reasons thereon, and justly concludes, *And as we have born the Image of the Earthly we shall also bear the Image of the Heavenly.*

AND if Mankind had the Kingdom of eternal Glory in Promise, in the first *Adam*; then, not *Christ*, but *Adam*, was God's First-born: And the original Heir of that Glory. For if *Christ* was the Heir of that Kingdom, it could not belong to any other; but either by Donation from him, or thro' Union to him. *Adam*, considered as a Creature, could not have any Right thereto: Nor could any of his Offspring claim a Right, by virtue of their Relation to him. But if the Right was first in *Adam*, and afterward in *Christ*; how came it to pass? Was *Christ* *Adam's* younger Brother? And did his Heirship commence when *Adam* died? Perhaps it may be said, "*Christ* gave the Kingdom unto Mankind, upon Condition of Obedience: And by Disobedience it being forfeited; he took it again into his own Hand." But does the Kingdom of eternal Glory stand upon such a precarious Bottom! The Scripture calls

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it, *A Kingdom which cannot be moved.* And be it observed, *The Glory of this Kingdom is Christ himself.* (k) And it is impossible for any Creature to enjoy it, in any other Capacity than in Union with him; *Christ* in them, and they in him. Separate *Christ* from it; and the Kingdom of Grace and Glory has no Existence. Therefore, to any Person who has any Conception, what the Kingdom of Glory is; it would not appear common Sense to talk, either of a Right thereto; or a Possibility of an Enjoyment thereof any other Way, but in *Christ* alone. There was no such Promise; nor any Hint of any such Design, in all the Scripture. There is no Intimation in the Word of God, of this Glory given to Mankind as a Reward of Obedience: Or his having any Right to it in his created Uprightness. All that appears in the Promise, was a *Continuance* in that delectable Paradise, where God had placed him. Which was the Height of the Felicity, which his Nature was then capable of.

BUT the eternal Kingdom was prepared for God's Elect, before the Foundation of the World: And it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared. It is secured in *Christ*, to them who are Heirs thereof, by virtue of their indissoluble Union to him; and not thro' their Relation to *Adam*. Nor had it ever the least Dependence upon any created Power: Or upon the Good or Evil of any Creature. Had Mankind kept his primitive Purity; this could not have prevented the Glorification of God's Chosen: Nor could his Fall be any Furtherance thereto. Or had he continued in his Uprightness; this could not have been any Means of promoting him to the prepared Glory.

(k) *Isai. lx. 19. Job. xvii. 24. Rev. xxi. 23.*

Nor could his Fall be any Hinderance to the grand Design. For the Plan was fixed in him, in whose Hands it could not miscarry: *For it pleased the Father, that in him should all Fulness dwell.* In his All-sufficiency, he is prepared for all Events: And in his Immutability, he is *The same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.*

BUT if Adam had been Heir of the Kingdom of Glory; all his Posterity had been Heirs with him: As all God's Elect are joint Heirs with Christ: And then, this Kingdom must have been prepared for all Mankind. And if so, all Mankind universally, must inherit that Glory: Or else it will not be given to them for whom it was prepared. And consequently, there must remain a Vacancy therein: And that Preparation, which God in the Depths of his Counsel, and infinite Wisdom, made before the World began; must be rendered insignificant. And the God of all Perfection, must forever behold an Imperfection, in that glorious Kingdom, and magnificent Palace, which himself had set up to be the Perfection of Beauty: And hath chosen to be his Delight, his Rest, and his eternal Habitation.

WHEREFORE I conclude, this super-abundant Grace, in the sublime Mystery of Godliness, is far surpassing any Thing that was in the human Nature, in it's created Excellency. That it includes salvation, but is not included in Salvation: But more extensive; and superior to a bare Restoration of that which was lost. Nor can this transcendent glorious Grace, come within the Bounds of a Duty: But is from first to last, altogether perfect, infinite, eternal, unchangeable, heavenly, and divine. *Having predestinated us unto the Adoption of Children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good Pleasure of his Will.----- According to his*
good

good Pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself. according to the eternal Purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. And here be it obliery'd, That I do not in any wise extenuate the Creature's Duty, and indispensible Obligation to his great Benefactor. But I view the Glories of sovereign Grace, in a Light surpassing all the Perfections of created Nature. Wherein I desire to ascribe all the Glory and Praise, to the eternal Three-One, the infinite *Jehovah*, the Rock of Ages. Unto him be Glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, through-out all Ages, World without End, Amen. --- O the Depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out! --- For of him, and through him, and to him are all Things: to whom be Glory for ever. Amen.

C H A P. III.

The Author's Reasoning discussed.

I HAVE diligently perused our Author's Performance: Carefully examined every Argument; and warily leached every Paragraph, to the best of my Capacity. But I find his Words so lax and doubtful, his Sense so undetermined, and his Reasoning so intangled; that it rather appears a confused Maze of Perplexity, than substantial Argument: Which wants unraveling, rather than admits of any direct Answer. For by expressing the same Things in so many different Lights, without fixing, and retaining any determinate Sense; his Meaning is so obscured, and the Subject so disguised; that I don't think it practicable to form a direct Answer: By Reason

Reason of the Uncertainty of the Constructions, which are to be put upon his Words. For whatever Answer I might form to his Arguments; he might evade the Force of it, by telling me, I had mistaken his Meaning; and that he had expressed the Thing in a different Light, in another Place; or that he had not explained his Meaning at all. And so he might charge me with a Misrepresentation; or palming a Meaning upon him, which he did not intend. And whether he left his Work in this Confusion, for want of Deliberation; or with a subtle Design, to gain upon the Unwary, and avoid the Searches of the more attentive; I shall not determine. But whatever I find in his Book, which appears material, or worthy any Remark; I shall endeavour to sort out, and reduce the Particulars under proper Heads; to see what the whole will amount to. And in this Part of my Work, Where the Author's Words are given *verbatim*, they are marked with a *double* Comma: And where I have only given, What I conceive to be the Substance of his Argument, it is marked with a *single* Comma.

FIRST, The false Hypotheses on which our Author proceeds,

Pa. 7, He argues, 'That Faith is purchased by *Christ*.' If he means, That the Life of Faith in the Soul, or any Kind of spiritual Blessing, is, or ever was purchased; I deny his Assertion, *Christ* purchased his Church; and by so doing, brought them into a Capacity to receive spiritual Blessings: And having received the Blessing of Faith, thereby they behold, and rejoice in the Purchase which *Christ* has made. But if *Christ* purchased the Blessings of Grace for us; was it because they were not contained in his own

Treasury? And if his own Fulness was not possessed thereof; from whom did he purchase them? He says, "The Question before us, is, Whether "this same saving Faith in *Christ*, is not also a "Duty? But what Sense can be made of a *purchased Duty*? Was it our Duty to have prevented *Christ* from purchasing it; by purchasing it for ourselves? Or, is it our Duty to purchase it from *Christ*, at the second Hand. He says, "Faith is the Gift of God." Then, is it our Duty to make God give it to us? or to accept the Gift when offered? or to improve it when we have received it? He calls it, "A Fruit of the "Holy Spirit." Is it therefore our Duty to make the Holy Spirit produce it in us? For he does not ask, Whether a Faith of like Kind, or something equivalent, is not a Duty; but the identical Thing; *This same saving Faith*. It is hard to say, which is most absurd; that the Gift of God, the Fruit of the Holy Spirit, should be Man's Duty; or, that the heavenly Gift, the spiritual Fruit should be merchandiz'd; or, That the Son of God should purchase the Duty of Man. But such as the Premises are, such will the Arguments be, which are built thereon.

P. 8, 21, 53, 54, He takes it for granted, 'That Men are damned for not making Satisfaction to a broken Law.' But the Premises are false; and whatever Argument is drawn therefrom, will be false of Consequence. The Law requires sinless Obedience; and in Case of Failure, it requires the Offender's Life: But it never requires, or threatens for want of any other Satisfaction. The Law, having damning Power, is the Covenant of Works; which never supposes Satisfaction, Restitution, Repentance, or any Equivalent: But either perfect Obedience, or
perfect

perfect Destruction. Nor did the first Threatning against the Breach of the Law, allow any Space for any such Thing: But said, *In the DAY that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.*

It is true, *Jesus Christ*, having entered into Covenant Stipulations, and Surety Engagements for his People; did, by a perfect atoning Sacrifice, make Satisfaction to the Law. For as he was become our Sponsor, and our Sin was imputed to him; the Law now deemed him as the real Offender, or guilty Person; demanded his Life, and took it. For the Sheep went astray; the Shepherd made their Case his own, and put himself in their Place: Therefore the same Law which required their Lives, justly required his. Which being a Life of such excellent Dignity, and Preciousness; it made such ample Satisfaction to the Demands of the Holy Law; that in Righteousness he might take it again, and his Sheep be set free. But the Law knew no Variation in it's Demand; but required the very same Thing from the Surety, as from the Principal: Nor did it accept any other Satisfaction, but what it first insisted on, *viz.* The Life of the Offender. Only this we may observe, That had our Lives been taken, they had been eternally lost. For no Degree of Punishment, or Length of Duration, could ever make Atonement: Inasmuch as the Creature would continue perpetually sinning; and it must be impossible for Satisfaction to be compleat, while Sin continued. And as the Law of God could never receive Satisfaction, from the Sufferings of a sinful Creature; neither could it be possible for that Creature to attain to any Degree of Virtue or Holiness, so as to recommend him to God's Mercy; while he was expelled the Presence, and Enjoyment of God.

Therefore, the Case must have been hopeless, the Misery remediless, and the Torment endless. But *the Blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without Spot to God*; an infinite perfect Holy Sacrifice: When all the Wrath of God had been poured upon him, and his whole Soul and Body had suffered all the Anguish due to Sin, and the Law had taken it's full Vengeance on him; it found no more to feed upon. He sustained all the Darts of Indignation, by his eternal Power; and absorbed all the Poison of the Cup of God's Fury against Sin, by his infinite Holiness. Therefore having made *an End of Sins* he brought in *everlasting Righteousness*. --- *Who was delivered for our Offences, and raised again for our Justification*. --- *Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the Pains of Death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it*. But the Author confounds 'Want of full Satisfaction,' with 'Want of perfect Righteousness;' in order to prove, 'That God's Law requires what was never given': (P. 8.) and then changes the Word, from "which we never had;" to, "which we can have only by the Gift of God." This Transition is a meer Fallacy. We deny that God's Law requires any Thing from a Creature, which that Creature never received, or was in his Power: But we don't deny that the Law demands that Perfection, which a sinful Creature has now put out of his own Power. We never had, or can have any Thing, but by the Gift of God. And if the Law requires any Thing, it must be what his Goodness has first bestowed. And since it is impossible for the God of Justice, to require what he never gave; he cannot require Faith where it has never been given: And therefore our Author's Enquiry, "Whether it be not
— really

“really so,” is an empty Amusement.

Pa. 36, 37, 38, 43, He boldly declares, ‘The Work of Grace is of no higher a Nature, than what was in Man by Creation, and is required by the moral Law.’ But may I ask this bold Asserter; Did the earthy Man (in his nature State) bear the Image of the Heavenly? Was his Body like *Christ*’s glorious Body? And was his Soul so capacious to see *Christ* as he is? Or did an incorruptible Seed dwell in him? And was it required by any Law; that Mankind should sit down with *Christ* in his Throne? That they should be Heirs of God? That their Maker should be their Husband? That *Christ* should dwell in their Hearts? That the Holy Ghost should abide with them for ever? And that they should have Fellowship with the Father and the Son? &c. What! A Master in *Israel*! A daily Searcher of the Scriptures above forty Years! And yet has found no more in that Holy Word, than a bare fulfilling of the Law of Nature! Nor seen any more Glory in him, of whom it is written in the Volume of the Book; than a Surgeon to heal the Wounds of the broken Man! Nor any more of the House of God erected by the King of *Zion*; than a Restoration of *Adam*’s old Fabrick!

BUT with what Design does he depreciate the Fulness of the Son of God, to a level with the first *Adam*? Is it to justify God, by proving, that heavenly Grace resided in the earthy Man; and therefore God has a Right to require it of him? This cannot be necessary for our Author. For he is bold enough to break through all Considerations of Justice and Equity: Asserting, that ‘God requires Things which never were in the Creature’s Power.’ And charging all that cannot

not join with him therein, with 'abetting the very 'worst of Heresies.' Or, is it his Design to favour the Arian Doctrine; that *Christ* is no more than a meer Creature? By proving him to have a limited Fulness; which having gone to the Extent, in the Blessings of Nature; his Grace is not able to advance the Holiness and Happiness of his People any further? For if *Christ* is God, he is able to increase the Riches of Grace and Glory, above Nature, as far as he pleases. But whatever is his Design; his Positions are false. And all the Arguments, or Conclusions drawn from thence, must be false. For *Christ* does not only give Life to his Members, but he gives it more abundantly.--- *Much more the Grace of God, and the Gift by Grace, which is by one Man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.--- Much more they which receive Abundance of Grace, and of the Gift of Righteousness, shall reign in Life by one, Jesus Christ.--- But where Sin abounded, Grace did much more abound.*

P. 35. "If it were not a Duty, it could not be a Grace; that is, If Faith was not required of us by the Law, it could be no Faith nor Benefit to us at all to have it." I freely confess, I am not able to conceive his Meaning in these Words: Or, whether they have any Meaning consistent with common Sense. Does he mean, That Man had all Perfection of Goodness in himself under the Character of Duty; and that all the Goodness in God, under the Character of Grace, is exactly proportionable, and no more? Or may we take it thus, That all the Blessings which God was capable of bestowing, were set before Man as the Reward of his Duty; and whatsoever was not therein contained is insignificant? Or does
he

he mean, That our heavenly Father is so high-
 gardly; that he never will bestow any Favour,
 but what he is obliged to do, on the Foot of
 Works or Duty? Or does he mean, Only moral
 Virtue, and calls it Grace, as the World
 vulgarly does? If so, I agree with him; That
 whatever is not a Duty (to practise) cannot be
 a moral Virtue: For the Essence of every moral
 Virtue was planted in the human Nature in
 Creation; and it is the Duty of every Man to
 retain (and practise) it, in it's Perfection. But
 though human Virtue is Grace in it's Kind, as
 every Gift of God is; yet, it is not to be con-
 founded with the Grace of *Christ* in the Gospel;
 therefore; be his Meaning what it will, it is
 equally false as unintelligible. For if moral
 Virtue only, were intended, the Duty and
 the Grace could not be the same identical Thing.
 The one is the Gift of God; the other is the
 Improvement of that Gift. And yet, Gospel
 Grace is of a much higher Nature; the Spring,
 the Conveyance, and Duration thereof, depend-
 ing immediately upon God. And therefore,
 the Author's Words inverted, would be strictly
 true, viz. "If it were a Duty, it could not be
 a Grace." Or they would be true, thus ex-
 pressed; viz. "If it did not call for Duty, it
 could not be a Grace." For whatever is a
 Duty, is distinct from any Thing that is Grace.
 And yet, whatever is Duty, has some Grace for
 it's Foundation or Motive. And also, what-
 ever is Grace, lays the Creature under an Obli-
 gation to Duty. • Grace and Duty are as dis-
 tinct, as Male and Female; and as inseparable,
 as Husband and Wife. The one is Goodness
 proceeding from God; the other, is an Obliga-
 tion to Gratitude, which that Goodness natu-
 rally

rally lays upon the Creature: And when the Creature makes a grateful Return for Favours received, he performs his Duty; and whensoever he fails therein, he is guilty of Sin. Thus all the Duties that ever God required, or Creatures performed, were Matter of pure Gratitude for Favours already received. God never required a Duty from any Creature, as a Condition of a Favour to be given afterward; but the Blessing is first given, and then the Duty required as a grateful Return. And wherever there is a Reward promised in Scripture to the Performance of any Duty, it never extends any further than the Continuance of some Benefit which God had freely given before: and which would be forfeited by Ingratitude. For no Blessing was ever enjoyed by any Creature, but as a free Gift from God. Whensoever Men perform Services, in Expectation to merit, procure Favours, or obtain Rewards from God; those Services cease to be Duties, and become Insults; for that is to treat *Jehovah* as if he were an Idol, and needed something from them. Yea, to speak strictly and properly, *Christ* merited his Church from under the Hand of divine Justice; for as he paid the Debt, their Freedom was due; but he did not merit any Blessing from God, either for his own or his People's Enjoyment: By paying their Debt, or bearing their Sin, he delivered them from Condemnation; but every Blessing which they enjoy, in Time or Eternity, is the free Gift of God. *Christ*, and all the Blessings dwelling in him, is the Gift of the Father. And it is impossible, in the Nature of Things, that any Being should merit any Thing from God.

BUT if nothing can be a Benefit or Favour,

to us but what is a Duty; *I ask*, Was Creation no Favour? Is Life, Health, Sustenance, &c. no Benefit? Are Redemption, Justification, Pardon of Sin, &c. no Benefits? Are Peace with God, Acceptance in his Presence, and Joy in the Holy Ghost, &c. no Favours? Are Adoption, Election, Predestination, and eternal Glory, no Benefits? Or, Are all these Things the Duty of Creatures? For he brings it quite home; "That if it was not a Duty required by the Law, it could not be any Favour or Benefit at all." Then, whatever the Believer enjoys by Faith, is a Duty required by the Law. And further, he tells us, (p. 27.) "The moral Law----knows no Difference of Elect or Non-elect, Regenerate or Unregenerate, but binds every one to whom *Christ* is preached, &c." If this be true, The Enjoyment of the Peace of God which passeth all Understanding: To be blessed with all spiritual Blessings in heavenly Places; and to have full Assurance of eternal Glory, must be no Benefits to God's Children; or else they must be the Duty of the vilest Reprobate that hears the Gospel preached. For, notwithstanding every Grace does not appear in it's Bloom in every Believer, and at all Times; whatever is a spiritual Blessing, is essential to the Being of Faith, as the Plant and Flower are in the Seed.

SECONDLY, The Author's Misrepresentation of our Arguments.

Pa. 7, 8. "I AM sensible there are some who will think they have sufficiently answered this Question; when they have said, How can that be a Duty required of Men by the moral Law of God, which they have not

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“ Power to perform of themselves; but where-
 “ ever saving Faith is found, it is the Gift of
 “ God, and of his Operation in us?” Who
 those Persons are, that will think this a sufficient
 Answer, I know not; nor do I believe our
 Author himself knows where to find them.
 Though I cannot be answerable for every Word
 that weak Persons may unwarily express; but,
 we are very sensible, The moral Law requires
 sinless Perfection from all Mankind; because
 such a sinless Nature we had, when the Law
 first commenced; and our present Incapacity is
 no Excuse. We maintain no such crude Fancies
 as, That our having corrupted ourselves,
 should make void the Law of God.----But we
 shall venture the following Answer, as sufficient
 to the Question, *viz.* The precious Faith of
 God’s Elect is a divine Blessing, a Communication
 of sovereign Grace; absolutely above the Nature
 of Duty, or Creature Performance: Which nei-
 ther Man, nor any other Creature of God; either
 has, or ever had, or ever can have Power to per-
 form: But is peculiar to him alone, that made
 Heaven and Earth.---- But I know some Persons
 who have suggested, that they have made us a
 sufficient Reply; when they have said, “ Has
 “ not God Authority to require an Act, before
 “ the Principle of Action be given.” And in
 Confirmation, have quoted, *Rom.* ix. 20. But
 notwithstanding we deny those Things to be the
 Duty of Creatures, which are peculiar to God;
 we believe it is the Duty of every Man to be di-
 ligent, in those Things which are within his La-
 titude. And consequently, It is the Duty of
 those Persons, to search the Word of God with
 more Attention; whereby they might come to a
 better Understanding, of the genuine Meaning
 of

GOD's ELECT, &c. III

of that Text: For it relates to the Sovereignty of God in the Dispensations of his Grace; and not to the Requirements of his Law. Concerning the Dispensations of Justice, God appeals to the rational Creature: *Judge, I pray you betwixt me and my Vineyard.* And clears himself from the wicked Charge, of *Reaping* where he had not *sown*. But in the Dispensation of his Goodness, God will preserve his Prerogative; *To do what he will with his own.* It is impossible to prove, That ever God required an *Act*, before he gave a *Principle*, commensurate thereto: Tho' he justly requires the *Act* after the *Capacity* for Action is imbezzled.

P. 31, 32. "AND if our Incapacity to avoid Sin, or perform Duty, be a sufficient Discharge from our Obligation to these Things; then Men have neither Duty to do, nor Punishment to fear; for the Law is made void. ---- And according to this wretched Way of arguing, let but the Sinner put himself out of a Capacity to yield due Obedience, and then all is at an End, &c." And did he ever meet with any Person that denied Faith to be a Duty, upon any such idle and vain Consideration? We deny it to be a Duty; not because Men have nothing to do, but because it is a Principle of divine Life; of a Nature specifically different from a Deed or Action of a Creature: Not because Sinners have lost their Capacity; but because there never was a created Being that was endued with such a Capacity: Not because the Law is made void; but because there never was a Law in Existence that required any such Thing. We do not in any Sense whatever diminish the Perfection, the Perpetuity, the Immutability, and sovereign Authority of God's

Holy Law; nor do we in the least extenuate the Obligation which every intelligent Creature is under, to him, who is the Author of his Being and of all his Happiness. We only distinguish between those heavenly Gifts which come down from the *Father of Lights*, and those Returns of Gratitude which are due from *feeble Dust*. Why then does our Author slander us with such wretched Stuff, feigned out of his own Heart?

Yet, we are very willing to examine, and be examined; whether his Scheme, or ours, has the more natural Tendency to excite to Duty: And which appears to have the stronger Influence to draw Souls to a chearful Readiness, Zeal, and Diligence, in keeping God's Commandments, we are ready to acknowledge to be the true Doctrine. *The God that answereth by Fire, let him be God.* And the Doctrine which kindleth in the Soul the Holy Fire, of Love to God, Obedience to his Commandments, and Zeal for his Glory; that is the true Doctrine of God.

THE Performance of Duty, is the keeping of God's Law; the keeping of God's Law, proceeds from the Love of God in the Heart; the Love of God in our Hearts, is kindled by his Love to us: And God's Love to us, is manifested in the Greatness of his Grace, in *Christ Jesus* our Lord. Therefore, whatever most magnifies the Goodness of God, sets the Riches of the Grace of *Christ* in the clearest Light, and represents the Blessings of spiritual Life to the highest Advantage, must be the strongest Stimulation to Holiness of Life, and genuine Obedience to God's Law. Now, whether does the Excellency of divine Grace shine more conspicuous, by that Doctrine which teaches, That
Faith

Faith is a Duty, required upon Pain of Damnation; or that which teaches, That it is a heavenly Blessing, superior to all created Perfection: A Stream of eternal Life freely flowing from God? That it is an Act which *Christ* calls us to perform, or a Grace which he communicates of his rich Bounty? That it is a Work which we are required to do, or a gracious Operation of the Holy Ghost? And whether may we expect a higher Flame of Love and Gratitude, in a Heart that speaks this Language, (concerning spiritual Things) *Mine Idol hath done them*; or, in a Soul whose Language is, *Lord, thou hast wrought all our Works in us*. But if our Opponents should say, 'They do not teach, that Faith is in the Creature's own Power, but acknowledge it to be the Work of God.' I ask, Which tends most to the Glory of sovereign Grace: To tell Persons, *Christ* performs for them, so much as their Natures were at first endued with, and what they were in Duty bound to perform, and no more; or, to tell them according to the Scriptures, That Grace has abounded, and superabounded, above all the Degrees of Sin, Duty, or Nature? *And that he that sat upon the Throne, said, Behold, I make all Things new*. And if a Man hears Faith preached as a Duty, till he is made to imagine, it is a Work which he can do; does this tend to raise his Heart to love God, or to admire himself? And if he hears himself commanded to perform what he knows to be an Impossibility; does this draw forth Love, or raise Resentment?

THE Law was never able to bring fallen Creatures to true Obedience: And if the Gospel of the Grace of God must be confounded with

with the Law, and clogged with legal Requirements, instead of running free in its own Channel; it will produce no more Fruit than the Law did; for it will gender to Bondage, and Bondage always genders to Barrenness: And thus this unnatural Cry of Duty, is the Way to destroy all Duty, but the spurious Brood of the boasting Pharisee. But the humble Soul, who beholds all Blessings flowing in the Channel of free Grace; and can say, *By the Grace of God I am what I am*; and of all that he does, is ready to say, *Not I, but the Grace of God which was with me*: This Soul will be ready to run in the Ways of God; to spend, and be spent, for Christ's Cause; and to labour *more abundantly*, than all the *Sons of Bondage*. If a Child must be engaged to perform his Duty, he ought to be regularly informed wherein his Duty consists; and upon what Considerations, and to what End it is to be done: But if he be told, his Life is his Duty, his Food and Cloathing is his Duty, all his Enjoyments, and every Thing about the House is his Duty, it is sufficient to confound any Creature, and cause him to do nothing at all.

Pa. 49. HE says, ' We venture the Weight
' of our whole Building upon the crazy Bottom
' of one single human Argument,' viz. " *Adam*
" had not Faith in *Christ*, nor was obliged to
" have it, before the Fall; and neither did,
" nor could lose it, either for himself, or for
" his Offspring; and, therefore, none of his
" fallen Posterity are obliged to believe in
" *Christ*." It is so far from being true, That
we venture the Whole upon this Argument;
that it would be false, to say, We venture any
Thing at all upon it. The Argument is not
joined

joined together with any Propriety. The Proposition relates to something to be possessed; the Conclusion seems to express something to be done. We don't put it in those Terms; '*Adam* was not obliged to have Faith in *Christ*.' But we say, The human Nature in it's highest Zenith, was infinitely below that heavenly Grace. Nor do we talk of it as a Task, as though we wanted to free *Adam's* Posterity from some Bondage, by saying, 'They are not obliged to believe in *Christ*.' But we say, To believe (spiritually) in *Christ*, is the Gift of God, by the Spirit of Faith; which in the Nature of Things, can neither be performed by, nor required of any Creature of God; and, consequently, it cannot come within the Latitude of fallen Creatures. And we stand by it as a scriptural Argument; God's Ways are equal, he does not reap where he has not sown; but living Faith was not sown in the human Nature; therefore, God does not require to reap it from natural Men. And it is a scriptural Argument; the Faith of God's Elect cannot be lost; but *Adam's* Rectitude was lost; therefore, it was not the same divine Principle. And as it is a Blessing superior to Nature; a special Gift in God's own Prerogative; it is contrary to common Sense, to talk of any Person being obliged to have it: Or, of one Person, either keeping or losing it for another. No Father can convey to his Offspring, or deprive them of any Excellency of Nature, higher than himself is possessed of. And if he intends no more than a Nature Principle, we fully agree with him, That *Adam* had, and lost it; from himself and his Offspring; but then he imposes on his Reader, by calling this a *Fruit of*

the Spirit. And if by believing, he means only that which is practical, we agree, That it is the Duty of every Person that has Opportunity to hear the Gospel: But still, this is an Imposition upon his Reader; when he calls it, *Saving Faith in Christ.* The Debate is not, Whether, this or the other particular Action be a Duty? But, Whether a Blessing which *Adam* (in Paradise) never partook of, can be made the Duty of his Posterity; considered as fallen Creatures? Practical Performances become necessary, as Times and Circumstances vary. It was not *Adam's* Duty to embrace the Gospel Revelation, because he had it not; but since we have it, it is our Duty to give due Attention to it. He was not obliged before his Fall, to toil and sweat for his Bread; but it is become the incumbent Duty of the greatest Part of his Offspring. While he continued sinless, it could not possibly be his Duty to repent: *But now,* God *commandeth all Men every where to repent.* I shall therefore venture to state the Argument thus, *viz.* No Creature in Heaven, Earth, or Hell, ever was, or ever can be obliged, by any Law, that ever did, or ever can exist, in Time or Eternity; to have what was never given him, or to keep what he never had: But Faith in *Christ* is a heavenly Grace; of a Kind quite different, and a Nature superior, to any Thing that was given to *Adam*, or possessed by him, in his primitive Rectitude: Therefore, it cannot be proved possible, That a just God should require any of the human Species to have it, or keep it; until himself shall first be graciously pleased to give it. And here I am willing to leave it, to stand or fall. Only, lest our Author should be obliged to tell the World, “ That we only vary
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“ the Form of the Argument; for we still
 “ have but one.” It may not be amiss to offer a few more.----Whatever is a Duty, is a Work of the Creature; but all Works of Man are excluded from bearing any Part in Salvation: Therefore, That Faith through which God's People are saved, is not a Duty.---Whatever is required by the moral Law, is a Deed of the Law: But a Man is justified without the Deeds of the Law: Therefore, the Faith whereby God's Elect are justified, is not required by the Law.---Whatever is a Duty, is an Action, Deed, or Work performed: But Faith is not a Work done; it is a spiritual Enjoyment: Therefore, Faith is not a Duty.---Whatever is a Duty, is required in Consequence of some Blessing bestowed, adequate thereto; which makes it a reasonable Service: But no spiritual Blessing can be bestowed prior to Faith; and no natural Blessing is equal to it, or sufficient to found such a Demand upon; therefore, God never did require it as a Duty.---Whatever is a Duty, is a Fruit springing from some internal Principle, or Root from whence it is produced: But Faith springs alone from God; for there is never a Root in the Creation sufficient to produce it; therefore, it is not a Duty.---Whatever is a Duty, is required from the Creature: But Faith never proceeded from any Creature, but is maintained in the Soul by a perpetual Stream of Grace proceeding from God; therefore, it is not a Duty.---Whatever is a Duty, is an Operation to be performed by the Person of whom it is required: But the Faith of *Christ*, is of the Operation of God; therefore, it is not a Duty required from Man.---Whatever is a Duty, is something which the Subject is obliged

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either to begin or finish: But it is *Christ's* Privilege to be the Author and Finisher of Faith; therefore, Saving Faith was never required from any Man.---Whatever is a Duty, must proceed by the Will and Choice of the Agent; otherwise it is no Virtue or Duty at all: But to be born again, to be called by Grace, or to be in *Christ* by Faith (which is one and the same Thing) is not of the Will of Man, but of God; therefore, this Faith cannot be a Duty.---Whatever is a Duty, may be furthered or hindered, by the virtuous or vicious Disposition of the Person: But that Faith which is the Gift of God, is not under any Influence, either from the Virtue or Vice of any Creature; but is alone of God's sovereign Will: Therefore, this Faith cannot come within the Compass of a Creature's Duty.---Whatever is a Duty, is properly a Debt, due before it is performed; and cannot possibly merit any Blessing, or procure any Increase of Enjoyments, beyond what the Person is already intitled to: But by Faith, God's Elect are made Partakers of such rich Blessings, as they never enjoyed, understood, or were capable of before: Therefore, Faith is not a Duty.-----Whatever is a Duty, is the Obligation which a Person is under, considered in such a particular Station or Capacity: But by Faith, a Soul is raised out of one State into another; and translated out of one Kingdom into another: Therefore, Faith cannot possibly be of the same Nature with Duty.---If these Arguments shall not appear cogent and conclusive, to any who shall read them; I desire they would be so kind, as by a fair and full Answer to inform me better. Only, not in the same Manner as the Author has done; for, though himself had the
stating,

stating of the Argument; he found no Way to answer it, but by railing Accusations.

THIRDLY, The Author's uncertain Sound, concerning Faith.

SOMETIMES he speaks of it as a pure Grace. (P. 22) " That saving Faith is the Gift of God, " on the Behalf of *Christ*, by the Operation of " his Holy Spirit. (P. 28) The Grace of Faith " through which we are saved, is the Gift of " God on the Behalf of *Christ*; and a Fruit of " the Spirit of *Christ*, and not of ourselves." Sometimes he speaks of it as Works. (P. 23.) " A commanded Duty--- a Work, which God " by the moral Law requires, &c. Believing " on *Christ*, is a Work that God requires of " them that believe not; but are yet under the " Power of a carnal Mind, and moved by it, " as the Spring of their Actions. (P. 25.) Our " Lord here speaks of Faith, under the Consi- " ration of a Work of God, to which they " stood obliged; and not under the Conside- " ration of an efficacious Operation of the " Spirit of God in Men---- Faith in *Christ* is " spoken of, as an Act of Obedience, &c. (P. " 26.) That this Believing is a commanded " Duty, and an Act of Obedience, required, " &c." Sometimes the proper Fruits of Faith, he calls Faith. (P. 13.) " True saving Faith " is a Sinner's fleeing to, receiving of, and rest- " ing on the Lord *Jesus Christ* alone for Salva- " tion." Again, the very self-same Things he calls (P. 14.) " The distinguishing Acts of this " Faith." Sometimes he makes the Gift and the Duty all the same. (P. 35) " The Faith " which is the Gift of God, and the Faith

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“ which is the Duty of Men, are not two different Kinds of Faith; but the very same Faith under two different Considerations: In the one View, it is considered as a Duty required by the Law; in the other, as a Grace bestowed by the Gospel.” Again, in the same Page, he represents it, both as an Habit, and an Act. “ The very same Faith, Repentance, Love, and Fear of God, that are required of Men, and which they stand indispensibly obliged to have, and act. (P. 50) “ To have and act such a Faith since the Fall.”

It is true, the same Word may have various Significations; and is commonly used in diverse Senses; to express the whole, or a Part; the Adjunct, or the Effect. For a Habit may be a Blessing, or Gift of God, as the Root; an Act, or Improvement of the Gift, may be the Creature's Duty, as a Fruit produced therefrom. But when we attempt to give a proper Definition of Things, we ought to express them very distinct, that our Meaning may be certainly understood. But he does not so much as attempt a due Distinction; but calls it the very same Thing. Nor does he inform us, through what Opticks we may behold it in such different Views. And what it is in Reality, seems impracticable to find out, by the Description he gives; therefore it must be impracticable to return a direct Answer. And whether it was thro' Simplicity, or by Design, that he left his Meaning so confused, I cannot say. But I think it is no Breach of Charity, to conclude, That they who receive their Instructions from the *faithful Messenger of the Covenant*; and are taught to *speak that they do know, and testify that they have seen*; their Words will not be *Yea and Nay*.

FOURTHLY,

FOURTHLY, The Author's unintelligible Reasoning.

Concerning that Faith which he calls the Gift of God; &c. he says, (P. 22) "And further, "that they might know how to obtain it." Now, he makes no Distinction at all, between *Faith* and *Believing*, which he says, (P. 24.) "Is "a Work that God requires of them that be-
"lieve not; but are yet under the Power of a
"carnal Mind, and moved by it, as the Spring
"of their Actions." Can a Thing to be obtain'd, and a Work to be done, be the very same? And whether is the Attainment, or the Performance, first in Order? For it is Sinners, in Danger of eternal Damnation; that are here to obtain the Faith: And carnal-minded Unbelievers are to do the Work. The way of obtaining which he mentions, is, 'Asking, Seeking, and calling on 'the Name of the Lord.' But is it supposed, That such Asking, &c. as proceeds from a carnal Mind, will obtain the Gift of God? The Apostle speaks of them that had *obtained like precious Faith*: But then it was, *through the Righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*. And not by their *knowing how*. If Faith be of our obtaining, we must either obtain it as Believers, or as Unbelievers. If as the former, we must first have it, and afterwards obtain it: If as the latter, the spiritual Blessing must be obtain'd by the Will of the Flesh: For the enquiring and seeking spoken of, must be performed without Faith, so effectually as thereby to obtain Faith.

(P. 23.) "AND is not the Faith of the Report of the Gospel, which, you say, they are "obliged to have, and act, abundantly sufficient, to enable and encourage them thus to "call on the Name of the Lord?" Who besides
himself,

himself, talks in such an uncouth Stile, of Persons being obliged to *have* or *act*, the Faith of the Report of the Gospel, is to me unknown. But I observe, he was here speaking, of calling upon the Lord, for the Faith of the Operation of God; and for their enabling and encouraging, supposes them to have the Faith of the Report of the Gospel. Which plainly implies a Difference, between historical and spiritual Faith, tho' he despises others for making that Difference. And (P. 32, 33, 34, 35.) he bends his Force to prove it to be one, and the very same Thing. But if that Faith which *Judas, Simon Magus*, and many of the *Jews* had, who still continued in Enmity, and Carnality; was, not only sufficient, but abundantly sufficient, to enable them to call on the Name of the Lord acceptably; Then the Promise of God, to pour upon his People, *The Spirit of Grace and of Supplication*, is insignificant. And if the Gospel comes in *Word only*; it may answer the End as well, as if it came *also in Power, and in the Holy Ghost*. And if our Author's Judgment be sufficient, to make these crooked Things straight, they are still nothing to his Purpose. For the Question is not, Whether needy Sinners, and thirsting Souls, be encouraged to seek, and call on the Name of the Lord, for his Grace? Or, Whether their Circumstances, together with these Encouragements, make it their Duty so to do? But whether the Faith peculiar to God's Elect be their Duty?

(P. 29) Concerning the Grace of Faith, which is the Gift of God on the Behalf of *Christ*; a Fruit of the Spirit of *Christ*, and not of ourselves; he says, " Yet I am equally obliged " to believe, that the Obligation to, and the

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" Act and Work of the very same Faith, considered as a Duty, is the Requirement of the moral Law." What that is which is both a Grace and a Work; a Gift of God, and an Obligation; a Fruit of the Spirit of *Christ*, and a Requirement of the moral Law; or how that which is not of ourselves (that is, if it be allowed to be of God alone) is to be considered as a Duty; I must leave himself to explain. For he tells us (p. 24.) " The Works which God doth, and which are peculiar to him alone----- can never be done by any Creature." But since he does not say, The same Faith; but the *Act* and *Work* of the very same Faith; it might admit of a Reconciliation, if the Rest of his Performance would coincide with such a Sense as this, viz. Faith is the Gift of God, and where it is given, the *Act* and *Work* of Faith (*i. e.* holy walking with God) must needs be a Duty. But he has prevented this Construction being put upon his Words. (P. 7.) " Whether this same saving Faith in *Christ*, is not also a Duty?" (p. 23.) " Faith in *Christ* is a commanded Duty." &c. And since the main Design of his Book, is to prove the very same Thing to be a Duty, which he frequently acknowledges to be the Grace and Gift of God; without distinguishing in what Sense it is the One, and the Other; we are left to grope out his Meaning, without any Rule whereby to find it.

P. 44. " We desire and earnestly intreat you all, to observe and remember, that we do not say, that any Man is obliged to believe in *Christ*, or to do any other good Work, or spiritual holy Action, by his own Power, independent of the Grace of God." These

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Expressions are so entangled and perplexed, that to me they appear inexplicable. Must I understand, Believing in *Christ*, and other good Works, and spiritual holy Actions, to be all one and the same, or of a different Species from each other? The Apostle makes a Difference. *But to him that worketh not, but believeth, &c.* Faith is a Principle of divine Grace: Believing is the immediate Effect thereof: All spiritual, or holy Actions of Men, are the more mediate (but true and real) Productions of the same Fountain: And all Works which are intrinsically good, in God's Sight, must be spiritual and holy; and so are the same Thing, with spiritual holy Actions. But we may more particularly distinguish: No bodily Exercise is spiritual, any further than it proceeds from spiritual Motives, or is attended with spiritual Influence: Nor is any Action either Holy or Unholy in itself, only as it springs from holy or unholy Principles. Works may be materially good in their own Nature, as they may be profitable to Men, though performed by unregenerate Persons; and as such, it is the Duty of every Man to perform what God commands in his Word: But no Works of a fallen Creature can be truly good in the Sight of God, which are not the Production of a living Faith: *Without Faith it is impossible to please him.*

BUT what am I to understand by Man's own Power, independent of the Grace of God? Is it, That Man is not bound to be independent, so as he may not accept Assistance from the Grace of God, when granted him? Or, That the Law considers him as dependent, and does

not

not oblige him to these Things, unless he be enabled by the Grace of God? For he tells us (p. 27.) "The Subject of the moral Law is a reasonable Creature." And therefore, the Law has no Regard to our Dependence, or Independence on the Grace of God. But whatever was the Duty of Mankind, in his primitive State; or whatever the Goodness of God has since made our Duty, by the gracious Manifestation of himself, or by any Act of Kindness to us; the Law requires it from the reasonable Creature; irrespective of any Thing, but the Favours we have received, and the Capacity with which we were indued. The Law knows no Mitigations, in Consideration of our lapsed Condition, and the Inability we have brought upon ourselves; but indispensibly binds us to ample Performance; whether God is pleased to afford his Grace or not. But am I to understand this Believing in *Christ*, &c. to be a mixed Work, neither Nature nor Grace; but an amphibious Production, equally partaking of both? And then, must I conceive, That God and the Creature are jointly bound; the one to afford Grace, and the other to perform the Work? Or, That the Grace of God is given to all that hear the Gospel, and they are obliged (upon Pain of Damnation) to accept it? This last I should have taken for his real Meaning (by the Scope of his reasoning) only, The Author pretends to reject the Principles of *Arminius*, as rotten. And as I am not willing to accuse him, of any more than I find fully expressed, I leave his Words as unintelligible; not knowing whether they have any Meaning, or not.

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FIFTHLY,

FIFTHLY, The Author's undistinguished Arguments.

Pa. 5, 6. HE tells us, " The Knowledge of *Christ*, and his Righteousness, is not manifested by, but without the Law; yet, is attested, and witnessed by the Law." For this he quotes the Apostle's Words, (*Rom. iii. 21.*) but without any Attention to the true Design; or any Distinction, between the Precept or killing Letter, whereby is the Knowledge of Sin; and the general Term (Law) for the Writings of *Moses*, or the old Testament. The Law, without which the Righteousness of God is manifested; and the Law whereby it is witnessed, cannot in Strictness be the same Thing. The plain Meaning of the Text is, That the commanding Precept discovers no justifying Righteousness: But that Volume, or System of Writings, wherein the Commandment is contained; doth witness of *Jesus Christ*.

P. 8. HE argues, ' That Want of Satisfaction for our Offences, exposeth the Offender to eternal Damnation. And if that be required of us by the moral Law, which we can only have by the Gift of God; then Faith in *Christ* may be required by the same Law.' Here he fixes a Proposition of his own inventing, without any Truth; and then draws the Inference from his own Shadow. But makes no Distinction between a Deficiency made by Sin, and a Blessing which Nature never did enjoy: Nor any Explanation, whether the Demand be made for Value once received, or for Value never received.

Pa. 14. HE argues, ' That all who hear the Gospel are bound to believe in *Christ*, because the Gospel requires it of all Nations; and otherwise

“ otherwise, dooms them to the heaviest Punishment, &c.” But what kind of Gospel this is, or in what Sense it dooms to Punishment, he does not inform us. And for the Thing that it requires, he seems to refer us to the above Paragraph; where he speaks of, The distinguishing Acts of Faith, and mentions several Things, which are peculiar to them that are already blessed with Gospel Grace: But whether it be the Acts only that are required; or, the Grace Principle from whence those Acts proceed, or both, is left undetermined. And the Sequel of his Reasoning in this Paragraph, bears no Relation at all to a living Faith, or the Fruits thereof: But to prove, a practical Adherence to the Gospel Révelation, to be the Duty of all natural Men.

Pa. 15. “ THAT this Faith, wherever it is found, is indeed saving.” But in what Sense Faith is saving, we are never told; nor is here any Description, before or after, whereby it can be known what this Faith is. Whether it be what he calls, (Pa. 8.) The Operation of the Holy Spirit in us; or what he talks of, (Pa. 12.) That saving Act of Faith; or, That direct Act of Faith on Christ; which he says, Man puts forth, we are left to guess.

Pa. 16. “ NOT believing on the Lord Jesus Christ---is assigned as the Cause of Mens Condemnation.” But here is no Distinction, whether Want of the spiritual Principle, Want of practical Application, or making Opposition to the Gospel, be the *real Cause*; nor in what Sense it is the Cause of Condemnation; whether as the sole Cause, or as an Addition to the Bulk of Sins; or whether Salvation and Damnation be offered on that Condition, and

so it be a *negative Cause*. But where no Sense can be gathered, no proper Answer can be returned.

Pa. 20, 21. HE tells of four Causes of Damnation, *viz.* "The Sin of *Adam*. Transgressions of fallen Creatures. Not making full Satisfaction, And not Believing." His third Cause is a Fiction of his own. And he gives no proper Account, how the Fourth comes to be damning. If it be a sinful Act, or sinful Neglect, or any kind of Violation of the Holy Law; it differs nothing from the second Cause. And if by *not believing*, or *not receiving* Christ, he means, Want of the vital Principle of Faith; it is no Cause at all, either of Damnation, or any thing else: For of Necessity, a Non-being, must be a Non-cause. And as for the other two, he does not inform us, whether they be joint or separate Causes: Nor how Damnation comes by the Sin of *Adam*: Nor how it comes for transgressing a Law as fallen Creatures. And as for that most dreadful, deep, infectious Stain, the Corruption of Nature (commonly called original Sin) he does not particularly mention it among his Causes: And whether he intended to include it in his first Cause, or in his second; or in both, or in neither, remains undetermined.

Pa. 22. "For God hath told them-----that "if they perish eternally, the Cause of their "Perdition is their Unbelief." No one denies that Unbelief (which is a departing from God) is the Cause of Perdition; for it includes all Sin: But the Question is not, whether positive Unbelief be the Cause of Perdition; but whether being destitute of saving Faith, be the damning Sin?

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Pa. 26. "BELIEVING is a commanded Duty---Not believing---is---a damning Sin,---"
 "It is by the moral Law, that God requires
 "this Faith." But whether this Faith be the
 vital Grace, or the Obedience that springs there-
 from; which he confounds in the foregoing
 Page, it is hard to say: For look two Pages
 back, and it is the Work which God requires;
 but look two Pages forward, and it is Grace,
 the Gift of God. Nor is it any more easy to
 guess, Whether the Gospel that required it,
 (Pa. 14.) or the Law that requires it now, be
 two Things, or one.

P. 29. "FOR any Man to affirm, that this
 "Faith in *Christ* is not required by the moral
 "Law, is no less than in effect to oppose and
 "contradict the express Word of God." Here
 he produces some Scriptures, where the Words
Faith and *Believing* are founded; but takes no
 Notice, whether the real Design and Meaning
 of these Texts be pertinent to his Purpose. For
 though none of the Scriptures he quotes, carries
 any such Sense as he pleads for; the bare Sound
 of the Words will stand for an Amusement.

Pa. 32, 33. HE asserts, 'That believing
 'the Report of the Gospel, which we acknow-
 'ledge to be a Duty; and saving Faith, which
 'we deny to be a Duty, is all the same Thing.'
 Here he makes no Distinction between the
 Duty, and the Grace from whence it proceeds;
 or between the spiritual Principle, and a prac-
 tical Adherence to Gospel Doctrines. He crowds
 a Number of Scripture Texts to prove his
 Position, without taking any Notice of the
 Spirit, Life, and Power expressed therein:
 And then tells us, (Pa. 35.) "Whosoever
 "hath this Faith, needs not to look for an-
 "other."

“another.” We are fully agreed, That he who hath the Faith held forth in those Scriptures, is born of God : But we are ready to prove, That much more is therein contain’d, than a practical receiving of the Report. We deny the divine Principle to be Man’s Duty : And where that Power is wanting, the Scripture never declares it to be true *precious Faith* : Nor are the *exceeding great and precious Promises*, annexed to any Faith, but that *of the Operation of God*.

Pa. 39, 40. HE reasons, ‘ That Life spiritual and eternal, are promised to the Doer of the Law ; otherwise, there could not have been any spiritual Death or Alienation.’ As for spiritual Death, no such Thing is mentioned in the Oracles of God : Nor is it possible there should be any such Thing, to a Soul made spiritually alive by Grace : Nor Alienation from God, to a Soul made nigh in *Christ Jesus*. But Man is dead unto, and alienated from, that Life of Holiness and Uprightness, which he enjoyed in his State of primeval Purity. Wherein he was spiritual, in the same Sense as the Law is spiritual. That is, pure, and right with God ; in all the Powers of the inner Man ; for the Law is spiritual, as it stands opposed to all that is sinful : But the Grace of *Christ* is spiritual, as it stands opposed to all that is natural. And the Glory Life, given to the Saints in *Christ*, never was promised to any Creature, upon any Condition whatever ; only to them who are Heirs thereof, and shall enjoy it as a pure Inheritance, through *Christ* their everlasting Father. But a Continuation in the paradisaical State, was promised upon Condition of Man’s Perseverance, in his primitive Rectitude :

rude : And had his Obedience been eternal, his Life had been of the same Duration. But the Author makes no Distinction, What the Life is, or what the Death is. The bare Sound of Words is all he seeks, to maintain his Cause, or inform his Readers.

Pa. 42, 43. " No more is necessary to our
 " eternal Life and Happiness, than what is re-
 " quired of us by the Law.-----For if eternal
 " Life was not promised in the Law, then
 " *Christ*---could not by his Obedience to it in
 " our Stead procure eternal Life for us." To
 keep the Law was all that was necessary, to pre-
 serve Man in his primitive earthly Station :
 But no Law has any thing to do with the Ad-
 vancement of the Saints, to the Throne of
 Glory with *Christ*. And *Christ*, by answering
 the Demands of the Law in our Stead, did pro-
 cure Redemption, Peace, and Remission of
 Sins for us : And by so doing, he made Way
 for a Display of Life, Grace, and Glory : But
 these he did not procure for us, but freely
 gives them to us, out of that inexhaustible
 Treasury, which resides in himself. *IN him*
was Life.-----*So hath he given to the Son to have*
Life IN himself.---*FULL of Grace and Truth*.---
This Life is IN his Son.---*Grace which was given*
us IN Christ, before the World began. ----*The*
Lord shall BE unto thee an everlasting Light, and
thy God thy Glory.-----*The Lamb IS the Light*
thereof. But our Author attends to no due Dis-
 tinction in these Things ; but confounds one
 Thing with another, in such an undigested
 Manner ; and hides his Meaning in so many
 Ambiguities, that his real Design is not to
 be explained.

SIXTHLY,

SIXTHLY, The Inconclusiveness of the Author's Arguments.

Pa. 27, 28. He argues, 'That because *Christ* is true God, Men are obliged to believe in him to the saving of the Soul.' But it does not follow as a Consequence, That because it is the Duty of all Men to believe in *Christ's* Godhead, and honour him as the Father; therefore, it is the Duty of all Men to believe that *Christ* will save them, or to be blessed with a supernatural Faith in him.

Pa. 31. He argues, 'That if Faith and all other spiritual Blessings, be not Duties incumbent on us; then all manner of Wickedness, and abominable Practices, are no Sins.' In this Argument he confounds (without Distinction) spiritual Blessings, with those practical Performances, that spring therefrom. But it is not in any Sense conclusive; that because it is not my Duty *to enjoy*, that which is God's sole Prerogative to give or withhold; therefore, it is not my Duty *to do*, what God has given me Power to perform, and his Law commands. Nor can it be made common Sense; that because divine Blessings are not comprized in Duties; therefore, all Duties may be neglected, and all Sins committed with Impunity: Or, that it is no Sin to violate God's Holy Law. Would any Man in the Use of his Reason, say, Because it is not my Duty to be possessed of his Majesty's royal Bounties; it is therefore no Crime to curse the King, or conspire against his Crown!

Pa. 36, 37, 38. He endeavours to prove, 'That a Soul cannot be raised to any higher Degree of Holiness, than that wherein he was created.' "All the Holiness and Right-
eousness

“ousness of Man, consists in his Conformity
 “to the Image, Likeness, and Law of God.--
 “In this Image and Likeness of God, Man
 “was created.---Neither can there be any Ho-
 “liness where there is no obligatory Rule or
 “Standard, to require it, and measure it by,
 “&c.” But it is not conclusive, That because
 all the Holiness of Man consists in his Confor-
 mity to the Image of God; therefore, all the
 Image of God is included in the Holiness of
 Man: Or, That Man cannot receive a brighter
 Image of God, and so partake of a higher De-
 gree of his Holiness. Nor is it conclusive,
 That because God created Man in his own
 Image; therefore, he must possess him with su-
 perlative Perfection; so as God should never
 have Power to endue any Creature with superior
 Excellency. Nor does it follow of Conse-
 quence, That because the intrinsic Holiness
 with which Mankind was indueed in his Crea-
 tion, is the Rule and Standard, whereby to
 measure all practical Holiness; therefore, it is
 the Standard to which God has bound himself,
 and beyond which he can never advance. In
 this Case, Righteousness and Holiness are not to
 be confounded: Righteousness is fixed to a cer-
 tain Standard; and there can be no Gradations
 below or above the exact Rule: But Holiness is
 the Excellency and Dignity of Nature which
 resides in any Being; either in God essentially,
 or in Creatures by Participation of his Good-
 ness. And does our Author certainly know,
 whether the incomprehensible God so far ex-
 hausted himself in the Creation of Man, that
 he can never communicate a richer Measure of
 Holiness? The Holiness bestowed in Creation
 did actually vanish away. And dare he pre-
 sume

sume to say, That God is not capable of communicating his Image, so as to abide for ever? Thus far I must take Liberty to differ from him; when he argues, 'That whatever Things are 'no Duties, can have no Concern at all in 'Man's Holiness.' That I assert, Whatever is of so low a Nature, as to be a Duty, never had, nor possibly can have any Concern in the intrinsic Holiness of the Saints.

Pa. 39. HE argues, 'That the Law promises eternal Life to the Doer; and there can 'be no greater Happiness; therefore, what the 'Law doth not require as Duties, is of no Moment at all.' The Ground of the Argument is false. Eternal Life was never promised to any Creature, since the World began, upon Condition of Obedience, or any other Consideration, but through free Grace alone. For *eternal Life* is *Christ* himself. And when he answered those that came to enquire after it, by the Deeds of the Law; he left out the Word *eternal*. Life is promised to the Doer of the Law: But there could be no Eternity in the Life, unless there had been Eternity in the Obedience. And it is not a conclusive Argument, That because Life was promised to Obedience; therefore, the highest Degree of Glory and Happiness which God can bestow, is annexed to that Obedience. All Happiness is the immediate Gift of God: And no Duty ever was conducive to the Attainment of any Happiness at all: The utmost Extent that is possible to any Duty, is a *Lengthening* of *Tranquility*, in the Happiness already given of God. Therefore, whatever is not of a Nature superior to a Duty, cannot possibly have any Concern in eternal Happiness.

Pa. 40. HE argues, ' That if the felicitous
' Fruition of God in Glory, was not included
' in the Promise to Obedience; then eternal
' Death in Hell, could not be included in the
' Threatning against Disobedience.' But it is
not conclusive; nor is there any good Sense in
the Argument, that unless God had promised
the highest of all Glory, as the Reward of O-
bedience; he could not render due and propor-
tionate Punishment to Sin. What! Was God
obliged to bind himself, to reward Men's Obe-
dience, with the utmost Felicity which his infi-
nite Perfection could communicate; or else let
Sin go unpunished! He says, " What was not
" Life in the Promise, could not be Death in
" the Threatning." Therefore, since eternal
Glory was never promised to Obedience; the
Privation or Loss thereof, was never threatned
to Disobedience. *The Children of the Kingdom*
shall be cast out. This is not a Threatning to
Disobedience; but a Declaration how Hypo-
crites should find themselves disappointed, and
cast out from their formal Profession, and from
the vain Hopes they had built thereon. But it
was not possible they should lose, be deprived
of, or cast out of that Glory which they never
enjoyed, only in their vain Imaginations; nor
was ever promised to them, nor prepared for
them. There is dreadful Threatnings against
Sin, but they are of another Kind; not the
Loss of the Glory of God in Heaven. For
whatever *Adam* had in Possession before the Fall,
or ever was promised to Obedience, or the Pri-
vation thereof threatned to Disobedience; bears
no Relation at all to the spiritual and eternal
Life, which the Saints possess in *Christ*.

Pa. 41, 42. "BUT to put this Matter for
 "ever out of all Dispute, that the very same
 "eternal Life that is preached by *Jesus Christ*
 "himself, is promised by the Law to the Doer
 "of it." Then he argues, From those Per-
 sons who asked *Christ*, what they should do to
 inherit eternal Life; and he directed them to
 keep the Commandments: Whence he con-
 cludes, 'It is not for Want of Power in the
 'Law, but the Weakness of the Flesh, that it
 'cannot give eternal Life.' This Word, *eter-*
nal, is a Supplement of his own, or a Figment
 gathered up from those legal Enquirers. For
 it is not possible, that the Law should eternize
 any Blessing; or insure it a Moment longer
 than the Charter is held by spotless Obedience.
 Nor is it conclusive, That because *Christ* di-
 rected the hypocritical and captious Enquirers,
 to the Law, thereby to put their Foolishness to
 Silence; therefore, the Law promised the same
 Life that is preached by *Jesus Christ*. He said
 nothing to them about what Life was in himself,
 nor did the Men know any thing of it. Their
 Enquiry was not after a Life of Grace, but a
 Life of Works: That Life which is in the Son
 of God, was not the Subject of the Con-
 ference.

SEVENTHLY, The Author's sophistical Ar-
 guments.

Pa. 10. "BELIEVING on the Lord *Jesus*
 "*Christ* hath eternal Salvation inseparably af-
 "fixed to it." This is his first Reason, to
 prove that Faith is a Duty, just adapted to
 amuse the Unthinking. For if this may pass
 for Argument; then Election, Adoption, Pre-
 destination, Redemption, and every Thing
 from

from which Salvation is inseparable, may, for the same Reason be proved Duties. But he has not told us, whether the Salvation be affixed to the Duty, by the Law or by the Gospel. But I shall turn the Argument. Faith is not a Duty, for eternal Salvation is inseparably connected with it: But whatever is a Duty, cannot have eternal Salvation infallibly affixed to it, either by the Law, or by the Gospel.

Pa. 28. To prove that Faith is a Requirement of the Law, he argues, ' That it is not ' a Requirement of the Gospel as a new Law; ' for then many dangerous Errors will flow ' in: And Faith would come in as the Matter ' of our Justification, &c.' What an *Ignis Fatuus*, to amuse the Unwary! Who pretends that Faith is required by the Gospel, as a new Law? Or, Who (beside himself) talks of the Gospel requiring it, and dooming to Punishment for want of it? We say, It is never required, but given. And what does he mean, by pretending to guard against Faith coming in as Matter of our Justification? Does he not continually urge it, as being required upon Promises of Life, and Threatnings of Damnation? And whatever is so required, is of the Covenant of Works: Which if it be performed, will be the Matter of our Justification.

Pa. 37. He talks of " Two specifically " different Images of the moral Perfections of " God----two Gods----two different Kinds of " moral Perfections, &c." with Design to shew the Absurdity of the Grace Image in the Saints, being a distinct Thing from the Nature Image in *Adam*. But great swelling Words are not Arguments.---There is the King's Image stampd upon his Coin; but the Stamp does not shine

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so bright in one Metal as in another. His Image is curiously imitated by the Painter, the Carver, and the Founder; And yet all these Images specifically differ from his living Image in his Son: And his Image in the Features of his Son, does specifically differ from his more excellent Image in the same Son; in his Wisdom, Justice, Temperance, Fortitude, &c.

Pa. 46. "It is no where declared---in the Word of God, that Faith in *Christ* is not a Duty---After above forty Years daily Search of the Holy Scriptures, I have never yet found the Place where it is written; It is not the Duty of those who have a Bible to believe in *Christ*.---But none of them have yet been able to shew me where it is written, Thou shalt not; thou oughtest not to believe in *Christ*; or, it is not the Duty of Men who live under the Gospel, to believe in, and receive the Lord *Jesus Christ*."-----What Sense is it to call upon any Person to prove a Negative? We deny it, until they shall produce the Place where it is written. Suppose I were to ask, Where is it written, Thou shalt not create Worlds? Thou shalt not stop the Heavens? Thou shalt not raise the Dead? &c. And because these Negatives are not found written, must I conclude, these Things are Men's Duties? And certain it is, The Work of Faith is as impossible to any Creature, as these Things are. But with what Design is this senseless Stuff introduced? Did he ever hear, from any of us, such foolish Talking, and idle Jangling, as, *Thou shalt not, thou oughtest not to believe in Christ*? &c. For while it remains an absolute Impossibility to every created Being; it would be equally vain to forbid it, as to command it.

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There is no such Nonsense in the Bible. The Scripture declares, That Faith is *not of ourselves, it is the Gift of God*. And our Lord has told us, *No Man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him.----No Man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father*. Therefore we don't represent it as a Task, but as a special Gift from the Father of Lights.

P. 50, 51. HE argues, ' That if Man be not bound to a Performance, which was not in Adam's Power before the Fall, then none of his Offspring are obliged to believe a Tittle of the Gospel Revelation; and so their Infidelity is vindicated and justified.' But will any considerate Reader think this an Argument; That because God does not require Things, in their own Nature eternally impossible, therefore, we are not Debtors to improve the Power which God has given us, in attending to the Revelation which he has made unto us? He says, ' This Argument establishes Deism.' But it is my Judgment (tho' he has been so kind to coin it) that no Deist of common Sense will ever make Use of it.

P. 52, 53, 54. HE argues, ' That if what Adam never had nor lost, cannot be demanded by any Law; then there can be no Obligation to Holiness and Righteousness: For as Man had not Power, if he sinned and fell, to rise again; by this Argument he is under no Obligation to perfect Obedience: Wickedness is no Crime; Men may go on in Sin, &c.' But it is not an Argument, That if no Law can require Things, which in their own Nature never were, nor ever can be possible; then no Law can require those Things which once were put in
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our Power, and the Power lost by our own Fault: Or, That because the Lord did not demand the Improvement of five Talents where only one was given; therefore he has no Right to require his own with Usury: Or, That God cannot be just, because he will not be unjust. So long as a Creature has a Being, the Obligation to Gratitude and Obedience can never cease. The Goodness of God leadeth to Repentance; and every additional Transgression enhanceth the Sinner's Condemnation: Though the Covenant of Works knows nothing of returning from Rebellion; of cleansing unclean Hearts, or washing polluted Hands: But considers Persons in their created Perfection, and requires Perseverance therein; or else considers them as Sinners, the Objects of Vengeance; and sentences them to perpetual Banishment from God, and Punishment proportionate to their Crimes.

P. 54, 55. HE argues, ' That unless that be
' required of us by the Law, which we never
' had, nor lost, nor ever was in our Power;
' the whole of *Christ's* Undertakings, and Per-
' formances for us, are totally subverted: Be-
' cause the Things which *Christ* did for us,
' never were in our Power.' But has this the
Appearance of an Argument, That because the
Law accepted from *Christ* in our Stead, that
which never was in our Power; therefore those
Things were required from us which we never
had? *Christ* laid down a spotless Life for us:
Did the Law therefore require a spotless Life
to be laid down by us? So long as our In-
nocency was retained, the Law had no Demand
upon our Lives: Therefore *Christ* did for us,
what no Law did ever require from us. To
talk of the Law requiring Satisfaction and A-
tonement

tonement from us, is a meer Chimera: No such Thing was ever supposed in the Law: But either perfect Uprightness, or everlasting Destruction.* He says, "What is not due from the Principal, can never be demanded of the Surety." But what is this to the Purpose? Did the Law require us to make Atonement for ourselves? Or *Christ* to make Atonement for us? No such Thing. *Christ* put himself in our Law-Place; and the Law seized upon him as the Offender; and took his Life instead of ours. But his Life being of such infinite Excellency, Virtue, and Value, as to answer every Demand of the Law; he was honourably acquitted, and triumphed over all the Powers of Sin. But it was because his Grace would do it, and not because the Law provided for any such Thing. Therefore I stand by it, No Law of God did ever require from any Creature, more than his Goodness had first given.

I HAVE now gone through the Author's Reasoning, so far as I apprehended any Thing of Moment; that required to be examined, or appeared to carry any Force of Argument. There be many boasting Speeches, and Calumnies in his Performance, which might justly deserve Satyr: But my Design is to contend for Truth, and not to expose the Man: Therefore I answer them with Silence.

C H A P. IV.

The Scriptures quoted by the Author examined and digested.

IT is the pure Word of God, which must decide all Controversies of this Nature. And if any of the Scriptures cited by our Author, be found to take in all the Parts of his Question; or it can be made to appear, That any one of those Scriptures is the Language of the moral Law; and that it is directed to unregenerate Persons, or a promiscuous Audience; and that it calls for saving Faith in *Christ*; I require no more. I shall then be ready to give up my Argument: For one Word from the Oracles of God is sufficient. Or, if the Scriptures produced do express so much; that by a due comparing them one with another, they will afford Matter for a well digested, and conclusive Argument; I am ready to submit my Judgment to rational Demonstration, deduced from the Word of Truth. But Arguments drawn from false Premises, falsely concluded, and Things confounded without Distinction; with some Scriptures produced, bearing some Resemblance in Sound of Words; This will not ponderate with me, until I have examined the Nature of the Argument; and the Coherence between the apparent Design of those Scriptures, and the Argument they are brought to maintain.

BUT before I enter upon the Texts cited by our Author, I chuse to take some Notice of one, which I don't find mentioned by him; but which I have often heard mentioned by others, as an invincible Proof, That saving Faith

Faith is the *Duty* of all Persons who hear the Gospel.

Job. xii. 36. While ye have Light, believe in the Light, that ye may be the Children of Light. To understand these Words of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, it is necessary to consider--- The Mode of Speech used--- The Persons to whom addressed--- The Blessing enjoyed, *Light*--- The Work to be wrought, *Believe in the Light*--- And the End proposed, *That ye may be the Children of Light*.

CONCERNING the Mode of Speech. There be many Scripture Sentences, expressed in the imperative Mood: At which some Persons straightway cry out, Law, Duties, Requirements, &c. when no such Thing is intended. All Commandments are not Injunctions, or compulsive Precepts. There was God's *creating Command*, in the Production of Beings. *He commanded and they were created*. There is his *preceptive Command* to Creatures when endued with rational Powers. *The Lord God commanded the Man*. There is the *Life everlasting Command*, whereby *Christ* makes Souls alive unto God. *I know that his Commandment is Life everlasting*.--- *There the Lord commanded the Blessing, even Life for evermore*.--- *I said unto thee, Live*. And there is the *New Command*, which *Christ* gives to his Disciples, when they are quickened by his Grace, and blessed with a spiritual Capacity. *A new Commandment I give unto you*. One of these four different Kinds of Commandments, relates to the natural Creation; and another to the spiritual Creation; whereby God performs his own Will. *He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast*. One is a preceptive Law, or Covenant of Works, to natural Men; and the

other is a directing Rule; or Law of Love to the Children of God, who are under Grace. Which ought to be duly distinguished.

AGAIN, many Things are spoken to the People of God, in the imperative Mood; which cannot properly be call'd Commandments to them. Some are Prophecies. *Awake and sing ye that dwell in Dust.* Some are Benedictions. *Peace be unto you.---- Receive ye the Holy Ghost.* Some are Invitations. *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you Rest.* Some are Encouragements. *Let not your Hearts be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me. &c.* And without due Attention to the distinct Modes, in which the Holy Ghost has been pleased to express his Will; we shall make wild Work with the pure Word of God. I know it is common with Persons of the Author's Sentiments, to raise a great Outcry, against unnecessary Distinctions: Because their Scheme is supported by a confused Noise. But they that desire to grow in the Knowledge of the Lord; ought not only to *read*, but to *search* the Word of God: *Comparing spiritual Things with spiritual*: Not only to catch the Sound, but to understand the Signification of that *which the Holy Ghost teacheth*.

CONCERNING the Persons to whom *Christ* addressed himself, in these Words. If they were spoken to his own Disciples; they were blessed with the true *Light*, and did enjoy living Faith already. Then the Words could not be a Command to have Faith, or receive *Christ* as their Salvation. But an Admonition to improve the Opportunity they had. By giving a close Attention to his Doctrine and Example. That whereas they were spiritually the Children of Light, by efficacious Grace; they might be

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manifestly the Children of Light, by the shining forth of that Grace, in their Life and Doctrine.

--- If the Words were spoken to the whole Multitude, they must either be spoken authoritatively, or ministerially. If it was authoritative, it must be either benedictive, or compulsive. But a Benediction to the whole Auditory, it was not: For then none of them had gone away unbelieving. And I do not remember, that ever *Christ* laid a compulsive Command, upon a mixed Audience. He taught with Authority, and reprov'd with Authority; and his own Disciples he commanded with Authority. (a) But he did not lay his Commands upon the Multitude, with the Authority of a Law-giver. For whosoever exercises the Authority of a Law-giver, must have the Authority of a Judge; which *Christ* did not take upon him in his Ministry; at least, not in this Place. (b) And if he spake in a ministerial Way, his Words were only persuasive, by way of Admonition; to move his Audience to make the best Improvement in their Power, of the Opportunity they were favoured with. For they did enjoy his Presence with them, who is *the true Light*; and had the *Light* of the Gospel published among them. And then the Admonition was, To receive *Christ* and his Gospel, according to that Light in which he had revealed himself to them: And not to believe in a Light which God had not afforded them: Or to receive *Christ* internally, while he had only been revealed externally. It was to believe in that *Light* which they actually had. And had the *Jewish* Nation taken that Advice, they had (in

(a) *Matt. Ch. v. vi. vii.* (b) *ver. 47.*

a national Way) continued to be the Children of Light. For God did not root them out of their Habitation, because they were not blessed with saving Faith; but because they rejected the *Messiah*, and despised the Record which God gave of his Son.----Or, the Words might be spoken to seeking enquiring Souls, whose Hearts God had touched, and were drawn to *Christ* by the Father: For such there appeared to be in that Audience. And then it was a comforting Admonition; that as the true *Light* had graciously begun to shine in their Hearts, they should diligently adhere to him and his Doctrine; in whom they might be the Children of Light, to their everlasting Consolation. For so *Peter* and *Paul* did, and other Gospel Ministers do: When they apprehend Souls to be under the attracting Influence of the Grace of God, they use their utmost Endeavour to encourage, and to draw them forward. So *Barnabas*, *When he had seen the Grace of God, exhorted them all, that with Purpose of Heart they would cleave unto the Lord.*----- Or again, *Jesus* might speak to his Auditory in general; to awake their Attention, and attract their Minds, to receive his Words, ponder them in their Hearts, and wait for his Instructions; which is practical Believing. And to let them know that himself alone could bless them, pardon their Sins, and save their Souls. And therefore it was a Matter of the utmost Importance, to give the most earnest Heed to what he delivered: Forasmuch as *Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.* And Admonitions are used to the same Purpose, by every faithful Gospel Minister.

BUT if we attend to the Context, it does not appear, that *Jesus* had addressed his professed Disci-

Disciples, in particular, or the Multitude in general, that Day: But some Enquirers, who appeared desirous of further Knowledge; and very probably were of those that were given him of the Father; whom he would *in no wise cast out*. For he manifested a strong Affection for them, and discovered unto them great Things. When he was told of some *Greeks* who desired to see him, he spake to them of the great Things of his Kingdom; and manifested some of his Father's Glory, in a Voice from Heaven; and told them, That Voice came for their Sakes. And as the People (either the same *Greeks*, or other attentive Souls) further enquired concerning his Doctrine and Person; He spake to them, *these Words*.---Wherefore, my Judgment is, That *Christ* spake these Words to the Objects of his Love, as a Benediction, attended with Life-inspiring Power; whereby their Hearts should be opened, Grace conveyed, and their Souls blessed with Power to believe; so as to become (manifestatively) the Sons of God, or Children of Light. *For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickneth them; even so the Son quickneth whom he will*. For he speaks with the omnipotent Breath of God, when he gives forth his Father's Commandment, which is Life everlasting.---O ye dry Bones, hear the Word of the Lord.---The Words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are Life. For, notwithstanding, many of that Multitude believed not; their Unbelief could not make the Grace of God of none Effect. And *Jesus* afterwards spake to the Consolation of them that believed in him, and in him that sent him. (c)

(c) Ver. 44, 45, 46.

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BUT if it should be thought, That *Christ's* Answers, and his Discourse, were not made to those *Greeks*, or the other Enquirers, but to his own Disciples (*d*); this Sense would quite cut off the other, of the Words being a Command to dead Sinners, to have saving Faith. But as he spake so as never Man spake, he could direct the same Words to different Persons, in different Circumstances, to answer different Purposes. The Words might be spoken ministerially to the Multitude, and attended with benedictive and authoritative Power to his Disciples. *To the one---the Saviour of Death unto Death; and to the other; the Saviour of Life unto Life.* But in what Light soever these Words of *Christ* are to be understood; unless the Speech be, *A Precept of the moral Law*; the Subjects spoken to, *unregenerate Men*; and the Thing called for, *saving Faith*; they prove nothing to the Purpose; which they are commonly urged for. But if *Christ* and his Apostles, in their Ministry, did never take upon them to lay Commands upon a mixed Audience; then these Words could not be given to the Multitude; yet, if it was only to believe in the Light which they had, or according to the foregoing Words, *Walk while ye have the Light*; then it did not require a spiritual Performance, where no more than a natural Light was afforded. The bare reading of the Words forbids us to suppose those Persons required to believe in any Light superior to what was actually revealed to them. But if it was to enter into the Light of Life and Salvation; it could

(*d*) Ver. 23.

not be the Language of the moral Law: For the Law cannot give Life, or make Provision for Salvation, nor can it have any Concern therein. Therefore, nothing can be gathered from this Text, in Favour of saving Faith being a moral Duty.

I COME now to the Scriptures quoted by the Author: And I shall take his whole Book in its Order, beginning with his Introduction, and proceeding through his eight Arguments, or Reasons which he offers, in defence of his Answer. And I shall all along observe; first to put down his Argument; or the Thing which I apprehend him attempting to prove, in as concise and just a Manner as I can: And then the Scripture Texts recited, or referred to in favour thereof; with my Remarks thereupon.

The INTRODUCTION.

“**T**HAT the true Object of Faith, the Lord *Jesus Christ*, is not discoverable by the Light of Nature: But is made known to Men, only by the supernatural Light of divine Revelation.” *Isa.* lxiv. 4. *Matth.* xvi. 16, 17, 18. *1 Cor.* ii. 9, 14.---iii. 11. *Eph.* i. 17.---iii. 8, 9, 10. *Tit.* i. 3. *1 Pet.* i. 10, 11, 12. This Acknowledgment is clearly proved by these Texts. But let the Reader closely examine them, and see how deep and glorious a Mystery the Gospel is, and then judge: If the Gospel Revelation be so far above the Sphere of all created Beings, as these Scriptures represent it; how should it be thought the special Grace published in the Gospel, should be required of

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Men? It is here pointed out, as the Work of God alone, to reveal *Christ*; and as a Thing which was not known to Men, nor even the Angels, from the Foundation of the World. How then should the divine Blessings, which proceed from this unfathomable Mytery, and sublime Glory, which utterly dazzles all created Eyes; be the Duty of Men? Yea, of Men under the Power of a carnal Mind!--“That the moral Law doth not give Men the Knowledge of *Christ*.” *Rom. iii. 20, 21, 22.* This Scripture sufficiently confirms his Acknowledgement. It speaks of the Righteousness of God, without the Law; and of the same Righteousness, by Faith of *Jesus Christ*. But how the Righteousness of God can be by Faith, without the Law; and yet the very same Faith be a Duty of the Law, I must leave the Author to explain. For the Apostle concludes that Argument thus: *That a Man is justified by Faith without the Deeds of the Law (e).* That is, Being justified before God, by the Blood of *Jesus (f)*; he receives the Evidence, and Application of Justification in his Conscience, through Faith in that Blood.---“The Reason why Man did not believe in *Christ* in his State of Innocency was, because he had not a Revelation of him.” *Rom. x. 4, 14.* *Christ is the End of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth.---How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard.* These Sentences are neither for, nor against his Argument; but may lead us to view a Righteousness, and a Faith, which are of pure Grace, above all Law Requirements. And to

(e) Ver. 28.

(f) Ch. v. 9,

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admire the glad Tidings of Gospel Grace, in beholding how far it excels the commanding and killing Letter: In that, all the Commands and Threats of the Law cannot produce Faith; but the Word of Grace, by the Spirit of Life is the Seed thereof. As for Man in Innocency; there is no room to doubt, but that he freely received every Revelation that God was pleased to make unto him. And had *Christ* been revealed to him; there is no reason to dispute, but that he would have believed the Revelation: But to have believed in *Christ* for Salvation, had been impossible, while Man stood spotless, without any need of a Saviour. And to have trusted in him as the Fountain of everlasting Life, had been impossible to *Adam*, considered as the Representative of all his Offspring, unless *Christ* had been revealed to be (what he never was) The everlasting Life of all *Adam's* Race.-----

“ If Man had had the Knowledge of *Christ*, and had not believed in him, he had been guilty.” *Jam. iv. 17. To him that knoweth to do Good, and doth it not, to him it is Sin.* Whosoever is favoured with a Revelation from God, and does not improve the Opportunity, to understand the Thing revealed; or whosoever has the Understanding, and does not pay due Regard thereto, it must be their Sin. But if a Person has the real Knowledge of a Thing, it is impossible but that he must believe the Truth of it: And yet, when he is ever so certain of the Truth of a Thing, it is equally impossible for him to trust therein, and stay his Soul thereupon, without Power given him from God.

“ Faith is the Gift of God, on the Behalf of *Christ*, and a Fruit of the Spirit.” *Eph. ii. 8. Phil. i. 29. Tit. iii. 5, 6.* These Texts confirm

his Acknowledgement. They hold forth pure Grace, without Mixture; and leave no room for a Conjecture or Enquiry, whether Faith be a Law Requirement. *John* xvi. 7. This has no Reference to the first Communication of Faith; but to the Gift, or Baptism of the Holy Ghost. Which is not to be confounded with Regeneration; but is a Promise perpetually in force, to the End of the World, to those that are Believers.---“Faith is procured and purchased.” *Rom.* iii. 24, 25, 26.---v. 9, 17. *Phil.* i. 29. *2 Pet.* i. 1. These Texts contain nothing in favour of the Thing they are brought to prove. For being *justified by the Blood of Christ-- through the Redemption that is in him--freely by his Grace* ---and receiving *the Gift of Righteousness*, &c. carries no Appearance of Faith being purchased. It only proves, that all is from *Christ*, of free Grace, and not by the Works of the Law. And it's being *given in the Behalf of Christ--to believe on him*; expresth nothing like a Purchase, but a free Donation. All Blessings proceed from the Father, by whom they are given to *Christ*, in whom they center, and by him, and in his Behalf they proceed to his Church; *which he hath purchased with his own Blood*. But *precious Faith* being obtained, *through the Righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ*; is no Proof that Faith is purchased. The Words don't relate to *Christ*, as obtaining Faith for us; but the Saints obtaining it, through his Righteousness: Or being blessed with Faith, in consequence of their Right to him as their Husband; and his Right to dispense the Blessing, as Heir of all Things.

“The Question is, Whether this same saving Faith in *Christ*, is not also a Duty, required---
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of all those who---have the Word of Faith preached to them." *Rom. x. 8. The Word is nigh thee, even in thy Mouth, and in thy Heart.* What he intends by this Text, he leaves us to guess. But where the Word is nigh, in the Mouth, and in the Heart; it is attended with Power: Therefore, this can be no Proof, That the living Faith, is the Duty of all who hear the bare Sound of the Gospel. And where the Power is, the Soul is certain to believe.---
 "Want of perfect Righteousness, unfinning Obedience, and full Satisfaction for our Offences, exposeth to Damnation." *Rom. iii. 19. Gal. iii. 10. Jam. ii. 10. Eph. v. 5, 6.* His first Cause of Condemnation (which he expresses as if it were two) is the real Truth; and is clearly proved by these Scriptures. But with the Truth he joins a Falseness; which last, does not receive the least Countenance from any of these Texts.

HIS FIRST REASON. Believing on the Lord *Jesus Christ* hath eternal Salvation inseparably affixed to it.

"FAITH is not an unaffecting Assent to the Truth of the Gospel." *Jam. ii. 17. Faith, if it hath not Works, is dead being alone.* This is the Thing we plead for: That Faith is not a Work; but a Grace which hath Works. Faith is the Root, and Works are the Fruit it bears; but if Faith itself be no more than a Work (as it cannot, if the very same Thing be a Duty) then it cannot possibly be a Root sufficient to produce other good Works. For observe, Whether Faith be performed by us, or wrought by the Holy Spirit; if it be required of us by the Law, and be our Duty; it must be of the Nature

ture of a Work. Therefore, we assert, That whatever that Faith is, which is capable of coming under any Law; it is incapable of being the Source of good Works: And will prove a dead Faith.

“ FAITH is not full Assurance that *Christ* is ours.” *Isa.* l. 10.---*liv.* 11. *Heb.* ii. 15. But he mixes his own Words with the Scripture Expressions. To the Word, *And have no Light*, He adds, *Of comfortable Assurance*, &c. Whereas it is more than he knows, whether the Darkness there spoken of, was Want of Assurance in *Christ*, or not. It is more likely that those Persons had Assurance, by the following Words: *Let him trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon HIS God*. But to what Purpose should a Person be encouraged, to stay upon his God; who does not know that he is his God? And before the Words, *All their Life-time subject to Bondage*. Instead of, *Were*, he puts, *And may continue*. Which, if it be not a flat Contradiction to the Apostle’s Meaning; it is a subverting his Sense: Who was not speaking of their continuing in, but their Deliverance from Bondage. The other Text speaks of being *tossed with Tempest and not comforted*. But concerning God’s everlasting unchangeable Love to his People, and their indissoluble Union to him; no stronger Assurance can possibly be given, than is expressed through that whole Chapter. Therefore, though I am far from saying, That every Believer is blessed with the Comfort of full Assurance, from the first Communication of spiritual Life, or Reception of precious Faith in their Souls; I am certain, the sacred Word gives great Encouragement to every Believer, to hope and wait for it. And there

GOD'S ELECT, &c. 155

there is nothing in these Scriptures, that gives any Countenance to the Doctrine of Uncertainty.---But notwithstanding, the Blessing of Assurance, is what all Believers have a Right to expect; it is what our Author does not enjoy. I would humbly hope he may be blessed with *true Faith*, notwithstanding he talks so confusedly concerning it. Many a Child talks with very little Understanding, concerning the Constitution of his own Body; who still is a living Child. Nor do I say, He never enjoyed any thing of that *reflex Act*, which himself talks of. But certain I am, That when he wrote his Book, he was a Stranger to that *full Assurance of Hope*, and *strong Consolation*, spoken of in the Oracles of God. And his own Conscience knows it. Therefore, I cannot but pity those Sheep led by such Guides.

“ The Ground and Warrant of Faith is a preached Gospel.” 1 *Tim.* i. 15. *Rom.* x. 8. *Mar.* xvi. 15. *Col.* i. 23. *Rev.* xiv. 6. *Rom.* xvi. 26. Nothing of Controversy occurs from these Scriptures: They are full to our Purpose. For we esteem the Word of Grace, to be the Seed of the Kingdom of God: Which under the Blessing of the Sun of Righteousness, and the Dew of the Spirit of Holiness; is the Means whereby Faith is begotten in the Soul. Not by pressing it out of the dry Ground of Nature; but bringing it down from Heaven: And causing that to spring up which is of heavenly Extraction. But I see not, what it is to our Author's Purpose: For if Faith have the Authority of the moral Law commanding it; What further Warrant does it need? It pours Contempt upon any Commander, for those under

der his Authority to seek any other Warrant, but their Commander's Word.---“ The proper Object of Faith is the Lord *Jesus Christ*.” 1 *Cor.* i. 23.---ii. 2. 2 *Cor.* iv. 5. 1 *Tim.* ii. 5. *Acts* iv. 12. *Matth.* xviii. 11. We fully assent to this Truth; and rejoice in the comfortable Portions of Scripture here referred to: Wherein *Christ* is so fully set forth as a compleat Saviour, that no room is left for any legal Requirements, to take Place in any Branch of Salvation.-----
 “ Distinguishing Acts of Faith.” *Heb.* vi. 18. *Col.* ii. 6. *John* i. 12. *Eph.* i. 12. *Cant.* viii. 5. *Isa.* l. 10. The Believer rejoices to experience in his own Soul, the Productions of Faith, or Acts of the Mind, under divine Influence, which are expressed in these Texts; they being the genuine Experience of all that are born again. But they are what a *Duty Faith* will never be able to produce.

“ Every one to whom *Christ* is preached, are bound in Duty to believe on him.” *Rom.* xvi. 26. *Made known to all Nations for the Obedience of Faith.* These Words are not spoken of Faith and Obedience, as being the same Thing; but of that Obedience which is the Fruit of Faith. And the Commandment there spoken of, relates to the Publishers of the Gospel. The Words do not convey a Conception, of Faith being Obedience: But of Faith, whereon Obedience depends. And whether we understand it of true genuine Obedience, proceeding from the Life of Faith in the Soul; or of that Obedience to the Word of Faith, which God requires of all Men where the Gospel comes; that is, humble Reverence, and diligent Attention thereto; and Reformation in Conversation

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which is the indispensable Duty of every one (g); yet, unless saving Faith be the Obedience itself; it is nothing to his Purpose. *John i. 11. Isa. liii. 1, 2.* These Texts shew how blind, and far off, Mankind is: But nothing at all about it being their Duty, to be blessed with saving Faith. *Rom. x. 16. But they have not all obeyed the Gospel.* This is not spoken of the moral Law, but of *Israel's* Disobedience to the Gospel; that is, not paying such Deference, and giving such Attention thereto, as that glorious Revelation naturally call'd for. *1 Pet. iv. 17. 2 Thessal. i. 7, 8, 9.* These are of the self-same Import, and have no regard to their having, or not having the Grace of Faith: But to that obedient Attention, to the Word of the Gospel, which that Law that commands Love to God, necessarily makes every Man's Duty. The Want of which is called, Disobedience to the Gospel: That is, Slight, Contempt, Opposition, and ungrateful Behaviour, under such a Display of Goodness. *Heb. ii. 3.* This speaks of Neglect: Which is the Sin of the Creature: A Defect in Practice; which is not the Thing in Dispute. It could not be want of saving Faith: For the Apostle includes himself among those he calls *holy Brethren. John v. 40. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have Life.* Here, the Lord was not accusing the *Jews* of the Want of living Faith; or being devoid of that which God had not given, but of practical Unbelief; Misimprovement of Opportunities; Neglect of searching the Scriptures, &c. But suppose him speaking of the spiritual Coming; it is nothing at all to the Purpose: For he nei-

(g) Acts xvii. 30. Rev. ix. 20, 21,--xiv. 7.

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ther commanded them to come, nor threatened them for not coming; but pointed out their Stupidity and Hypocrisy, in boasting of being *Moses's* Disciples, while they neither felt the Power, nor saw the Light contained in his Writings. See the Context. *Mark* xvi. 16. *John* viii. 24. These Texts clearly shew, That there is no Salvation from Sin, but in *Christ*: nor any Way of receiving that Salvation, but by Faith. But they make no mention, of Persons being in Duty bound to believe. A Description of Persons, or Things; is not to be confounded with an Injunction laid upon them. For if so, we might argue, That because peculiar Privileges belonged to the First-born in *Israel*; therefore it was the Duty of every *Israelite* to have been the First-born. Or, because a *Levite* was not to serve in the Tabernacle, till he was thirty Years old; it was the Duty of every young Man among the *Levites*, to be thirty Years old. For this kind of reasoning will follow, if every Text that expresses the Difference between Believers and Unbelievers, must pass for Proof, That every Man is bound to believe spiritually in *Christ*. But all these Scriptures here cited, give no Countenance at all to his Assertion: Though they fully prove the Sin of Neglect and Disobedience, the Alienation of Men's Minds, and the certain Perdition of all that live and die Unbelievers.

“ This Faith, wherever it is found, is indeed saving.” *John* i. 12. ---iii. 14, 15, 16. ---vi. 47. *Rom.* viii. 17. *Gal.* iv. 7. *Mar.* xvi. 15, 16. *Acts* x. 43. ---xiii. 38, 39. ---xvii. 30, 31. *Heb.* x. 39. 1 *Pet.* i. 9. As he sometimes calls Faith a Work, and sometimes a Grace; and never informs us which Way it is saving; it is hard

hard to determine what he means by *this Faith*. But these Scriptures are very full Proof, That true Faith and Salvation are inseparable: Tho' they are nothing to his main Argument. For the only Words among all these Quotations, which carry any Colour of Countenance towards a Duty Faith; and which many esteem a Master-piece; *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*; are quite foreign to the Purpose. They contain no such Thing as a binding Commandment, or Law Duty: But a faithful Instruction to an enquiring Soul, pointing to him the Way to look for what he wanted. And both this, and the rest of the Texts here cited, speak the Language of Love and Consolation: And differ as much from that threatening damning Law, which he says, commands Faith; as Light differs from Darkness.

HIS SECOND REASON. The contrary to this Faith, is assigned as the Cause of Men's Condemnation.

"Not believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, is a damning Sin, because Faith is a Duty required by the Law." *Rom. iv. 15.---v. 13.* These Texts make it very clear, That whatever is of a damning Nature, is a Sin against the Law. But the Question is, Whether that Unbelief which stands condemned in Scripture; be the Contrary to a vital Principle of Faith; or the Contrary to practical Believing? The former is a Non-entity: The latter is a sinful Omission, a certain Indication of a wicked Heart. *John xvi. 8, 9. He will reprove the World of Sin---Of Sin, because they believe not on me.* Now observe, The Reprover is the Spirit of Truth. Therefore his Convictions must be genuine, upon a

true Sight of Things as they are: And not upon a delusory Vision of Things as they are not. Therefore the Sin to be convinced of, could not be a meer Vacuity, or being destitute of the Gift of God: It must be some mental, or practical Iniquity. A Man cannot receive a convincing Reproof in his Conscience, concerning any thing which is, and always was impossible to him; and of which, no Evil within himself has been the Cause. A Daughter knows she cannot be the Heir, because she is not a Son: But it is impossible she should feel Guilt of Conscience, because God has made her what she is. A Man may know, That if he was among the Saints in Glory, his Enjoyments would excel what they now are: But he cannot receive a Reproof in his Conscience, because he is not ascended thither. Likewise, a Sinner may be sensible, that he is destitute of living Faith; and at the same Time, deeply reprov'd in his Conscience; of Sins in Thought, Word and Action; and particularly the Sin of Unbelief, in neglecting, or despising the Gospel of *Christ*. But these two Branches of Conviction, proceed from different Springs; and have different Effects upon the Mind. The latter is the Person's Wickedness, and lies upon the Conscience as a killing Weight. The former is a Vacancy, and leaves the Person under his distressing Want. Or thus, The Corruption of Nature, and Conversation, with all the Aggravations of Sin, come upon the Soul as so many stinging Serpents, or devouring Lyons: The Want of heavenly Life, appears to him as a Vacuity, a Gulph fixed, or an immense Distance, between him and Deliverance. But Consciousness of Sin, and Guilt upon the Mind, does not proceed from Want of

of having the true Faith. I do not say, but some Persons through Ignorance, not understanding the Difference between legal and spiritual Operations, may find their Consciences burdened with confused Convictions; that they have not spiritually received in *Christ*; that they have not savingly believed in *Christ*; that they have not effectually closed in with *Christ*, &c. But this kind of Convictions proceed from a dark confused Mind, and not from the Spirit of Light. For a Soul having a just Conception what the true Faith is (however he may be distressed, and cry out for want of it) cannot possibly have his Conscience wounded with a Sense of Guilt, merely because he does not enjoy it. And suppose we take this Saying of *Christ*, as the Author does; that the Holy Ghost would reprove the World of Sin, because they did not believe to the saving of the Soul; where would the Reproof center? Does the Soul experience Guilt, because God has not wrought this Faith in him? This is impossible in the Nature of Things. For however earnestly a Person may desire a Thing; or how much soever he may murmur because he has it not; Guilt never seizes the Conscience, merely on account of what God has not done. Does Guilt arise because himself has not done the Work which belongs to God? This is also impossible to a Man in the Use of his Reason. For however his Conscience may accuse him, for Omission of Things within his own Latitude; he cannot feel Conviction because he did not those Works peculiar to God. Which our Author confesses (P. 24.) can never be done by any Creature. Does he find Guilt because he has not done something equivalent; or that might have stood instead of this divine Operation;

tion; and so prevented our need of it? This cannot be the Case: Because this would not be the very same Faith. And whatever is, or ever was possible to be done by any Man; if it were not the very Work which God doth, it could not be the Thing in question. Does the Reproof fall upon the Soul, for his not asking this Grace from God? This seems to be the Author's Intention: (P. 23.) But this will not come to the Matter in Hand, for it is not asking and seeking for Grace; but the very Faith itself, which he asserts to be a required Duty; and the contrary a damning Sin. And it was not because they did not ask, and seek; but because they did not believe on the *Messiah*; that the Spirit of Truth should reprove the World of Sin. Therefore, the Sin spoken of, was not their being destitute of that precious Faith, which they had no Knowledge of: But their contemplative and active Wickedness, which they did know, and must be conscious of; in rejecting, despising, denying, and hating the Holy One (*b*). And the Convictions of the Holy Ghost here mentioned, were not by opening their Hearts, to understand the Mysteries of Grace: For as such the World cannot receive him. For he that was to do it, was the Comforter: In which Capacity, the Spirit of God was never promised, nor given to any, until they were become Believers: Therefore the Reproof did not intend an internal Impression, upon the Souls of the World. But the Promise was made, to them who by special Grace were the Disciples of *Christ*; that the same Spirit, by whom their Hearts had been quickened,

(*b*) Chap. xv. 18, to 25. *such* *the* *world* *should*

should further manifest his Power in them; as a Guide, a Comforter, a Teacher of the Mysteries of the Father and the Son; and should so abide with them for ever: And that the Manifestations of his Grace Power in them, should convince the World of *Christ's* sovereign Authority: And reprove their Enmity and Opposition.

JOHN iii. 18, 19, 36. *He that believeth not is condemned already, because, &c.---He that believeth not the Son, shall not see Life; but the Wrath of God abideth on him.* These Words fully inform us, That a Sinner (for his Sins) is already under Condemnation; which Condemnation will continue, while he continues in Unbelief: Which is a Description of the present State of such a Soul; and not a Threatning. But if it be objected, "That the Unbelief is urged as the Cause of Condemnation: And is opposed to that Believing which is free from Condemnation." I answer: Believing is not the proper Foundation Cause of Justification, as our Author acknowledgeth. (P. 29.) It is only a manifestative Cause, whereby the justifying Righteousness of *Christ* is made manifest in the Conscience. Therefore, setting the Unbelief in direct Opposition to the Believing; it only proves a manifestative Cause, whereby that Condemnation appears to remain, which the Sinner was under before. And this is not the only Place where the Word is used in the same Sense. For *Jesus* said, *The Father himself loveth you; Because ye have loved me.* This cannot be understood of their Love being any Foundation, or moving Cause of the Father's Love. To which the Words of the Apostle *John* had been a direct Contradiction. *Not that we loved*
God,

God, but that he loved us. But through their Love to *Christ*: or, Because they loved *Christ*; it appeared that the Father had loved, and drawn them to his Son, by the Cords of his everlasting Love. *We love him, Because he first loved us.* But if any are so tenacious of the Sound of the Word, *Because*; that they will urge it as the Ground, and Reason why they are condemned; I hope they will also allow me to retain the Words in the following Verse, which the Author has quoted jointly with these; and which explain this Unbelief: *And this is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World, and Men loved Darknes rather than Light, because their Deeds were evil.* Here is three strong Ingredients, sufficient to work eternal Damnation: *Misimprovement of Light; Love of Darknes, and evil Deeds.* This, and not being destitute of that which God was not pleased to give, is the damning Unbelief.

2 THESS. ii. 10. *And with all Deceivableness of Unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the Love of the Truth, that they might be saved.* The Persons spoken of, are the Instruments of *Antichrist*: And the Cause of their Perdition is, Not receiving the Love of the Truth. Now, either this Love of the Truth was something which they might have been active in receiving, or it was not. If it intended the special and spiritual Love of *Christ*, which is first and last from God alone, and cannot be rejected of any to whom it is given, nor received by any to whom it is not efficaciously applied; then it could no otherwise be the Cause of Perdition, but in a negative Sense; they being already in a State of Damnation, as Sinners; from which they could not be saved,
for

for want of the heavenly Blessing. As a Man falling into the Fire, but not instantly consumed; yet dying before he receives Assistance; it is lightly said, He lost his Life, because there was none to help him: But the real Cause was the Fire: And the actual Cause was his falling into it. But if the Love of the Truth, intends no more, than such an Adherence to the Gospel, as they might have been active in; then we learn from the Words, That for choosing their own Ways, and despising the Goodness of God; they were in a judicial Way, left to the Delusions of their own Hearts, which by increasing their Wickedness, must enhance their Condemnation. But the sole Cause of Damnation, it could not be, in any Sense whatever. For it would be vain Jangling, to talk of a Man being damned, for not believing in a Saviour; unless he had need of a Saviour: Which he could not have, if he was not in a State of Damnation already. And it would be equally absurd, to say, A Soul was damned for not believing, who was in a State of Damnation before. Every Contempt, or Opposition of Gospel Light, is a Violation of the Holy Law, and must be an Aggravation of Condemnation: Inasmuch, as it is an Addition to the Account, which shall be opened in the Day of Judgment. And this plainly appears to be what the Apostle had in View, as the Cause of Perdition and Damnation. For he tells us it was *Wickedness, Lying Wonders, Deceivableness, Having Pleasure in Unrighteousness, &c. (i).* And while such Abominations are

(i) Ver. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

pointed out; there can be no Reason to confine the Sense of the Words, to the Want of living Faith. If it be objected, "That it was such a receiving of the Love of the Truth, whereby they might have been saved; for want of which they were damned." I answer: There is no such Thing in the Text; as, *That they might have been saved*. Nor is any such Thing taught in all the Bible, That any Soul ever might have been saved, with an everlasting Salvation; only those who are, and shall be saved. It is true, Many Persons and People, might have been saved with a temporal Salvation, had they obey'd God's Word. *Nineveh* had been destroyed, if they had not practically repented. And *Jerusalem* had been spared, and gathered as Chickens, under *Christ's* providential Wings; had they practised what was in their Power, but they would not. But the Words in the Text are, *Because they received not the Love of the Truth, that they might be saved*. They made a Profession of the Truth; but not receiving the Love thereof in their Hearts, they fell away: (k) And after the Working of Satan, they came with a Pretence to Truth, only to deceive; not with any Desire of Salvation to themselves or others: But to impose upon others, and cover their own Wickedness. It is this Hypocrisy, and not want of what God never gave; which is given as the Reason of their Destruction.

Mar. xvi. 16. Rev. xxi. 8. Rom. vi. 23. Luke xii. 45, 46. THESE Texts do sufficiently prove, That all who live and die in Sin and

(k) Ver. 3.

Unbelief,

Unbelief, shall be damned. But what is that to the Purpose? We know all Unbelievers are in a State of Perdition: And all positive Unbelief, which has a Being in the Soul, or proceeds from the Man, or comes into Practice; is a positive Cause of Damnation. But that is not the Thing in Dispute. We say, The contrary to a living Faith, which is only a vacuative Unbelief, or being destitute of the Life of God, can only be a negative Cause of Damnation. The Want of a Pardon to a condemned Malefactor, may be a negative Cause of his Execution: But it cannot be the positive Cause, or any Cause of his Condemnation. He is condemned for his Crime; and executed for the same. And in the Nature of Things, it is impossible that want of Pardon should have any Influence, into his Condemnation or Execution. The Design and Use of a Pardon, is to interpose between the Sentence and the Execution. A Pardon cannot possibly be in force, prior to Condemnation: And were it offered to a Person uncondemned, and actually refused; that Refusal could not be a Crime. Or should a Pardon be provisionally prepared, upon any Consideration; it could not have any Virtue, until Condemnation should commence, in one Form or other. So that want of Pardon can never be laid (as a Crime) to any Person's Charge. So, if we enquire, Why such a Criminal was put to Death? The Answer is, For such a Crime. But if we ask, Why did he not escape the Execution, as well as his Accomplice? The Answer may be, Because no Pardon was granted to him. In the same Sense, it may be said, Men perish in their Sins, for want of pardoning Grace; or because the

Grace of Salvation was not applied to them by Faith. But it cannot (with any Propriety) be said, This Deficiency was laid to their Charge, as a Crime; or was the real Cause of their Damnation.

HEB. iii. 19.---iv. 6. *So we see they could not enter in because of Unbelief.---And they to whom it was first preached, entered not in because of Unbelief.* Our Author seems to vaunt over these Words, as being undeniable to his Purpose. But does not inform us, what the *Rest* there promised was; nor what the *Unbelief* was, which hindered their Entrance. But the Design of the Apostle is very evident. To excite the Believers to give the most earnest Heed; to the Truths of the everlasting Gospel; that they might not be wavering, but fixed and established, in the Faith of our Lord *Jesus Christ*. To stir them up to Watchfulness, Prayer, Holiness of Conversation, Godly Fear, and orderly Behaviour in the House of God. And by way of Admonition, sets before them the Example of their Fathers in the Wilderness, which Things were written for our Learning (1). For *Abraham* was a Type of *Christ*, The Seed promised to him was a Type of the Gospel Church, and the Land of Rest promised to them, was a Type of the spiritual Rest of the Saints. But through Hardness of Heart, murmuring against God, Want of Attention to his Word, and other Rebellions; summarily comprised in this Word, *Unbelief*; many of them fell short of the Land. For notwithstanding the Promise of God was unchangeable; and the Unbelief of

(1) Rom. xvi. 4. 1 Cor. x. 1. to 11.

the *Israelites* could not prevent that Nation, from enjoying the promised Possession; yet it did actually hinder their entering in, during that Generation. So, notwithstanding nothing shall prevent God's Elect from the Enjoyment of *Christ* in Glory; some *Roots of Bitterness springing up*, may so trouble them, as to be a great Hindrance to their present Rest, and Communion with God (*m*). The Land of Promise might also be a Shadow, of the eternal glorious Rest; but it does not appear to be tended in this Place. For first, we are admonished to labour to enter into it (*n*): But no Labour of Man can have any Influence into the eternal Rest. *I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.* Secondly, A Fear is suggested of falling short: But it is impossible for such Souls as these *Hebrews* were (*o*); to fall short of eternal Glory. *This is the Father's Will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing.* Thirdly, He speaks in the present Tense: *For we which have believed do enter into Rest.* But a Person who has believed, does not presently enter into Glory. Fourthly, He speaks of those who were already entered (*p*): But does not mention the triumphant Glory; but ceasing from their own Works. Which is a comfortable State of Rest, and Satisfaction in *Christ Jesus*; to have their Minds stayed upon, and all their Hopes centering in him; for Life and Salvation, Grace and Glory. *For we are the Circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and*

(*m*) Chap. xii. 15.

(*n*) Ch. iv. 11.

(*o*) Ch. iii. 1.---vi. 19.

(*p*) Ch. iv. 10.

rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no Confidence in the Flesh. And this is a Rest, which every Believer who is led into the Mysteries of the Gospel, enlarged in spiritual Experience, and established in the Faith of *Jesus*; enters into, while in this Tabernacle. Unto which, Christian Diligence may much contribute; and carnal Negligence may much retard. And the Believing, to which he exhorts these *Hebrews*; is not the living Principle of Faith (which they already had) but a practical waiting on, and walking with God: For as in Nature, Life and Health are Blessings alone from God; yet in an ordinary Way, pure Air, wholesome Food, and moderate Exercise, are very conducive to the Health and Growth of a Child; so in Grace, spiritual Life and Support are from God alone; but pure Doctrine, experimental Acquaintance with the Love of *Christ*, and humble walking with God, are very conducive to the Establishment of the Christian. *And we desire that every one of you do shew the same Diligence, to the full Assurance of Hope unto the End.* And the Unbelief against which he cautions them, *Lest any Man fall after the same Example of Unbelief: Is, An evil Heart of Unbelief, in departing from the living God* And not a negative Unbelief, in not being graciously called of God. For the plain Design of these three Chapters is, to disentangle the Minds of Believers, from all Yokes of Bondage, legal Requirements, and Creature Sufficiency: And to fix them upon *Christ*, the great High Priest; and upon the great Salvation, and substantial Rest, secured in him: That they might enjoy that Peace, Consolation, and Boldness before the Throne of God; which is peculiar to them
whose

whose Hands have handled of the World of Life : And have known him that is from the Beginning : So as to hold fast the Confidence, and the Rejoicing of the Hope firm unto the End.---And if ever our Author be led into the Glory of the Gospel ; to the Acknowledgment of the Mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ ; he will understand this spiritual Rest : Though as yet he never did enjoy it. As I can appeal to his own Conscience ; that he knows, he is not blessed with that Hope which is sure and steadfast ; nor can rejoice with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory, in Confidence of the Salvation of his own Soul ; and of receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved. Though perhaps he may not know the Reason, why these Things are lacking in his Faith. But the Case is obvious : That he is cleaving to a Spirit of Bondage, and turning again to the weak and beggarly Elements ; mixing moral Duties with divine Grace, and legal Performances with spiritual Operations : Which is an effectual Bar : And (till God shall please to remove it) is certain to prevent him (or any other Man) from entering into Christ's Rest. And it is easy for a Child in Grace, to see, that he cannot enter in because of Unbelief.

“ UNBELIEF is the Work of Men, and a most sinful wicked Work it is.” 1 Job. v. 10. He that believeth not God, hath made him a Lyar, because he believeth not the Record that God gave of his Son. But to make God a Lyar, supposes something more than a meer Vacuity, or being destitute of divine Life. That is, practically to slight, contemn, despise, reject, or wilfully neglect the Word of God, and the Record therein contained. But for a Soul not to enjoy what God has not given, or not to be what God has not

not made him, does not make God a Lyar. And the Dispute is not, Whether that Unbelief which is condemned in the Scripture, be the Work of Men, and a wicked Work? But Whether a Person not having a Blessing, which never was given him, nor ever was in his Power to obtain, be the wicked Work intended? *Job. i. 11, 12. Luk..x. 16. Heb. ii. 2, 3. x. 38, 39. Matt. xxi. 42. Act. iv. 11. Luk. xxiii. 11.* All these Scriptures relate to Persons disregarding, despising, neglecting, rejecting, or insulting *Christ*; which are wicked Works; but they express nothing either for or against the Matter in Debate.

“ ONE Cause of Damnation is the Sin of *Adam.*” *Rom. v. 12, 15, 16, 17, 18.* These Scriptures have nothing to do with any Thing we oppose or contend for; unless he would have taken Notice of some of the Sentences, wherein the Excellency of the Grace given in *Christ*, is magnified beyond what we lost in *Adam.* *Much more the Grace of God---hath abounded unto many. ---Much more they which receive Abundance of Grace, &c.---* “ Another Cause is, Transgressing a Law, which as fallen Creatures they had not Power to keep.” *Job. vii. 19. Rom. iii. 9, 19. vii. 10. viii. 3, 7, 8. Gal. iii. 21.* These Scriptures do so fully discover the Depravity of the human Nature; that they leave no Room for us to hope for any Restoration; unless we be blessed with a Faith superior to any Thing that can proceed from a created Power, or come within the Verge of Duty.---- “ Another Cause of Damnation is, “ Not making Satisfaction to a broken Law.” *Rom. iii. 19, 20. Gal. ii. 16. Heb. ix. x. Psal. cxliii. 2.* All these Scriptures are utterly foreign to his Argument: But they clearly

clearly hold forth that Doctrine, which we constantly maintain, That there is an Impossibility of Justification, any other way but in *Christ* alone.---“ But if you still believe not, shall your Unbelief make the Faith of God in his Word without Effect.” 2 *Tim.* ii. 13. *Rom.* iii.

3, 4. Very true.

“ SINNERS might obtain saving Faith by seeking and asking.” *Ezek.* xxxvi. 37. These Words are spoken to the House of *Israel*: But suppose them figuratively spoken of the Gospel Church; it relates to their Building up, after they were cleansed from their Iniquities (*q*); and has no Reference to Sinners obtaining the Grace of Faith. *Luk.* xi. 10, 13. was spoken to the Disciples of *Christ*, who had a Right to call God their Father. It is that Promise of the Holy Ghost, which is not to be confounded with miraculous Gifts, which were only Signs; (*r*) for this is the abiding Substance. Nor is it to be confounded with Regeneration: For this Gift, Sealing, Anointing, or Baptism of the Holy Ghost, is a Promise peculiar to those that already believe. 2 *Cor.* iv. 13. speaks nothing of obtaining, but of having the Spirit of Faith; whereby they believed, and spake: Whence it plain appears, Believing proceeds from the Spirit of God, and not from the Duty of Man. *Jam.* i. 5. is spoken of Believers, whose Faith was in trying; directing them to ask Wisdom; not Sinners to ask Faith. *Jam.* iv. 2. is a Representation of the Folly of wicked Men; and seems to be set before the Believers by way of Admonition,

(*q*) Ver. 33. (*r*) *Mar.* xvi. 17, 18.

to avoid their Ways; but is quite foreign to obtaining Faith. *Rom. x. 12, 13, 14, 15, 17.* Here the Apostle assures us of the Salvation of all that call on the Name of the Lord: But is so far from speaking our Author's Language, about obtaining Faith; that he suggests in the strongest Manner, that no Man can call upon the Name of the Lord, until he does believe thereon: And fully proves, that Faith is of *Christ's* sending, and not of Man's obtaining. But if the first Work of Faith must be obtained by Prayer; that Prayer which precedes Faith, and obtains it, must be the Prayer of Unbelief.

HIS THIRD REASON. The Holy Scripture declares, That Faith in *Christ* is a commanded Duty.

"THIS is plain from the Question proposed to our Lord, and the Answer he returned to it." *Job. vi. 28, 29.* *What shall we do, that we might work the Works of God?* Jesus answered and said unto them, *This is the Work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.* He says, These Persons professed themselves to be the Disciples of *Christ*. Then, if *Christ* directed his Speech to them in a ministerial Way, as his Disciples; he must speak, as to Persons who had Faith already: And the Believing spoken of, could be no other than a diligent Improvement of the Blessings they were supposed to have received. But this was not the Case: For as the Author observes (in ver. 26, 36, 66) they appeared to be Unbelievers; and as such *Christ* spake to them. And it is plain, through the whole Account of this People, they were Strangers to God; and consequently asked they
knew

knew not what: To which impertinent Question, *Jesus* returned a full and pertinent Answer; but to them a Parable; as he did to many others. But I deny (what the Author asserts) That *Jesus* answered according to the true Design of the Question; for the Question had no true Design, nor good Sense. For if their Design was, what it appears to be, How they should make themselves acceptable to God? it could not admit of any direct Answer: For as they were carnal Persons, it was impossible for them to please God. Suppose a Person should ask, What shall I do, that I may scale the Stars? What shall I do, that I may bring the Poles together? What shall I do, to make myself an Angel? &c. What pertinent Answer could be returned, directly according to the Design of such an impertinent Enquirer? So, *Christ* did not answer according to the Foolishness of their Enquiry; but according to the Truth of the Thing; and tells them, *This is the Work of God*; his own Work, which according to his rich Grace, and by his sovereign Power, he works in the Hearts of his Elect. And tho' he spake to them in the second Person (Ye) who many of them might never be blessed with this Work of God; yet, some there might be among them, to whom he had a gracious Design. And all Things are for the Elect's Sake. Beside, he did not always confine his Speech to a strict grammatical Order, but used what Figures he pleased: And this Kind of Enallage, or Change of Persons, was not unnatural in his Answer; whether they were of his Sheep or not. And if he did not mean the Work which God himself doth; he did not mean the very same Faith of God's Elect: And

if he meant any other Thing, it is nothing to the Author's Purpose. But it is evident, thro' the subsequent Part of the Chapter, That the Lord was speaking of the Works which are peculiar to God alone. For Believing, and Coming to *Christ*, are synonymous Terms: And he says, *No Man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him.----It is the Spirit that quickneth, the Flesh profiteth nothing.* Therefore, whatever confused Conceptions the Enquirers might have, the Answer was full and clear to the Purpose; That no Work of the Creature could be available in the Sight of God, nor pleasing to him, without Faith in *Christ*; which is God's own Work in the Soul. And take the Words in any Light whatever; they have not the least Appearance of the Nature of a Command in them. But to strengthen this, he brings in *Heb. xi. 6. Without Faith it is impossible to please God.* These Words have not so much as the Shadow of a Command; but a Declaration, That such Persons, as the Author acknowledges the above Enquirers to be, cannot please God. How then should they be supposed to work the Works of God, in a Capacity wherein it was impossible to please him? Then to prove, That those Souls which went back, had not the efficacious Work of God in them; he cites, *Heb. x. 38, 39. 1 Pet. i. 5. 1 Job. ii. 19.* Which Scriptures fully prove, the final Perseverance of all true Believers: And in proving this, they prove Faith to be a divine Principle; above the Nature of Duties, or Law Requirements.

"FAITH in *Christ* is spoken of, as an Act of Obedience." He repeats, *Rom. xvi. 25, 26.* Which does not speak of Faith, as an Act of Obe;

Obedience; but of the Obedience which may be expected to spring from thence; which is such spiritual Obedience, as the moral Law could never produce.----“ Unbelief is declared to be an Act of Disobedience.” Here he repeats, *Rom. x. 16. 1 Pet. iv. 17. 2 Thess. i. 7, 8, 9.* Which Scriptures mention Disobedience to the Gospel. But he tells us, it is not the Gospel but the Law, that requires Faith: So then, this Disobedience cannot be the Opposite to that Faith. Nor do any of these Texts express any Thing, like the Want of living Faith, being charged as Disobedience; but want of due Attention to the Gospel Revelation.

“ MEN are under the same Obligation to believe in *Christ* as to believe in God.” *1 Tim. iii. 16. Phil. ii. 6.* These Texts express no Obligations to saving Faith, nor any Thing like it; but they declare so much of the Excellency, Glory, and Dignity of *Christ*, as obliges us to believe him, in all Things to be far superior to earthy *Adam*. *Joh. v. 23. xiv. 1.* The former of these proves it to be the Duty of all Men, to give divine Honour to the Son; but nothing of believing in him for Salvation. The latter was peculiarly adapted to the Disciples, and has nothing to do with Unbelievers: Nor is it expressed in a compulsive Stile; but a cordial Confirmation of his faithful Promise.----*Exod. xx. 3. Isa. xlv. 20, 21, 22.* The former of these is a direct Command, and the latter a strong Admonition, against Idolatry. Only in the last Verse it is said, *Look unto me and be ye saved, all the Ends of the Earth: For I am God, and there is none else.* Which is a prophetic Benediction, or loving Invitation, upon the strongest Foundation of Hope and Comfort; but no Appearance of

a legal Commandment.----“ All Works of the Law are excluded from being the Matter of Justification.” *Rom.* iii. 20--26. *Gal.* ii. 16. iii. 11. *Phil.* iii. 9. This is an undeniable Truth; and these Texts are full to the Purpose; but has no Concern with the Controversy. Only as these Scriptures advance Faith, with the same Breath as they exclude the Law; he ought to have reconciled this, with Faith being a Duty of the Law.----“ Faith must be a Work of the Law, or else it would be the Matter of our Justification before God: But Faith hath not the Matter of Justification in itself, but only in *Christ*.” *Rom.* iii. 24, 25, 26. v. 9. x. 4. *Jer.* xxiii. 6. *1 Cor.* i. 30. *Isai.* xlv. 24, 25. These Scriptures clearly prove, That all Righteousness is in *Christ* alone. But the Righteousness of *Christ*, imputed to his Elect, is manifested in their Consciences by Faith: And what kind of a Righteousness must that be, which is to be applied to the Soul by a Work of the Law? Or, is the everlasting Righteousness of *Jehovah*, by a Thread of legal Righteousness, secured to his People? But why must we be so tenacious of Faith being a Work of the moral Law, lest it should be a Work of the Gospel, as a new Law; while there is one perfect eternal Law, which may be regulated under different Sanctions; but no other Law can have Existence; and Faith is the Gift of God, and cannot possibly have any Relation to any Law whatever? And what does he mean by, Faith not having the Matter of Justification in itself? Are we to imagine Faith to be a self-subsistent Matter? Faith proceeds immediately from *Christ*, it's Author; is perpetually maintained by *Christ*, it's Finisher; and instantly fixed upon *Christ*, it's

it's sole Object; and can never prove a Rival to him; for as it cannot have a separate Existence, a separate Interest is impossible. And neither these Texts, nor any other in the Bible, represent the precious Faith, as having a Being separate from *Christ*.

HIS FOURTH REASON. For any Man to affirm, that this Faith in *Christ* is not required by the moral Law, is in Effect to contradict the Word of God.

1 JOH. iii. 23. *And this is his Commandment, That we should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ.* But his Proposition is, That the Commandment extends to all that live under the Gospel Revelation. Whereas this Text regards Believers only; such as were passed from Death to Life; who dwelt in *Christ*, and *Christ* in them. (s) And it could not relate to the Being of Faith, which they had before this Commandment commenced; but to a practical Attention to all the Admonitions, Instructions, Commandments, Promises, and Example of *Christ*: As a Means of establishing their Souls in Knowledge, Faith, Love, Holiness, &c. and bringing Glory to his worthy Name. Therefore, it is neither less nor more to his Purpose. 1 Tim. i. 5, 6, 8. But it may be doubtful whether the Commandment here mentioned, has respect to the moral Law, or the ministerial Commandment. (t) The End and Design of which is to lead Souls to the Knowledge of *Christ*; that through receiving of his Fulness, they might be blessed with Faith unfeigned, a

(s) Ver. 14. Ch. iv. 13. (t) See Ver. 1.

good Conscience, and a pure Heart; so as to produce Charity, or sincere Love; which is a Fruit of the Spirit in every Believer. But let him take it in his own Sense; for the moral Law. The Apostle does not say, The End of the Commandment is Faith; but Charity. Which is often declared to be the Substance, or Fulfilling of the Law. And the moral Commandment is truly fulfilled, when this Love springs from Faith unfeigned, a pure Heart, and a good Conscience. Perhaps the Objector may argue, That if the Law requires Charity, which cannot be produced without Faith; then the Law requires Faith. But I deny the Consequence. For that Love which the Law commands, was practicable, before Faith in the Son of God was possible. But Man having lost his Rectitude, so that he cannot fulfil the Commandment, unless the Goodness of God is pleased to bless him with Faith; is no Argument, That Faith is under the Command of the Law. The Law required the poor Widow to pay the Creditor; but it did not require the Prophet to increase her Oil; by which she did, and without which she was not able to pay. (u) And suppose the Law had justly required *Jesus* and *Peter*, to pay Tribute; it could not require the Fish to bring the Money. (w) 2 Tim. i. 5. iii. 15. These are only brought to prove, That the former Text intends saving Faith, in which Sense I understand it. Matt. xxiii. 23. Luk. xi. 42. And have omitted the weightier Matters of the Law, Judgment, Mercy, and Faith.--- And pass over Judgment and

(u) 2 Kin. iv. 1, 7. (w) Matt. 17, 24, 27.

the Love of God. These parallel Texts, relating to the Scribes and Pharisees; do both take Notice of Judgment, which the Station of those Persons obliged them faithfully to execute; but they had corrupted. And the Love of God, in the latter Place, answers to Mercy and Faith, in the former. And if we consider these Words, in Conjunction with the Context; The Design of *Christ* is very conspicuous, so as no unbiassed, intelligent Reader can mistake it. For he had been taxing them with Injustice, Cruelty, and Hypocrisy; and now he charges them with the Omission of the contrary Virtues, Judgment, Mercy, and Faith. Which Faith intended nothing else but Fidelity, Truth, Sincerity, and Faithfulness in their Stations; or that Love to God and Men, which they ought to have shewn in their whole Conversation. Nor is there the least Appearance of the Grace of Faith, or Believing to Salvation, being intended. Therefore, unless the Reader be so weak, to be amused with the bare Sound of the Word, without any Regard to the true Intent; these Texts are nothing at all to the Author's Purpose. *Acts* x. 43. *Job*. viii. 24. The Repetition of these Texts, wherein the State of Believers and Unbelievers is represented, has no Concern at all with his Argument.---“The Law that requires this Faith is the moral Law.” *Matt*. xxii. 37, 38, 39, 40. Here we have a complete Summary of the Holy Law of God; but no Hint of *Christ* as the Object of Faith; neither of saving Grace; nor Believing. Therefore, the Scuffle which the Author makes in this Place, about separating, what God has joined together, might well have been spared. For no Commandment of God does join Faith and moral

Duties together : And what was never joined together, Man has no Opportunity to put asunder.

“ ALL other spiritual Blessings are the Gift of God, and out of our Power, as well as Faith.” *Gal. v. 22, 23.* We freely allow, that all spiritual Blessings are above the Power of any Creature ; and flatly deny, that any spiritual Blessing is the Duty of any Creature. But we as strongly contend, That it is the Duty of every one, who is blessed with spiritual Blessings, to let their Light shine before Men ; by exerting themselves to the utmost of their Power, to bring forth the Fruits of the Spirit in their Lives. And the true Design of this Text is to shew, That the true Grace of the Spirit, naturally produces true Holiness in Conversation. And among other Fruits, *Faith* is mentioned : But an observant Reader cannot lightly mistake, but may easily see, by the Apostles Reasoning concerning *Walking* in the Spirit, setting these Fruits against the *Works* of the Flesh, and the Words placed immediately before, and after the Word *Faith*, that the meaning is practical, and intends Truth, Sincerity, Fidelity, &c. But suppose the Love, Joy, Peace, and Faith here mentioned, should be taken for the immediate Fruits of the Spirit in the Soul ; and not Practicals, as the other Fruits are ; all that could be gathered from thence, is only, That the Apostle called both the immediate Blessings of Grace in the Soul, and the consequent Virtues of Conversation, *Fruits of the Spirit*. This would not be a Proof, That because the practical Part are Duties, the Grace Communications must be the same.----
“ To deny Things to be Duties, because they
are.

are not in our Power, makes void the Law." 1 *Job*. iii. 4. *Rom.* iv. 15. --v. 13. 1 *Cor.* xv. 56. These Scriptures prove an undeniable Truth: That Sin is the Transgression of the Law. But they do not prove, That the Law is made void, by a proper Distinction between Things which are practicable to Creatures, and consequently required by the Law; and Things impossible to a created Nature, which cannot come under the Inspection of any Law.---" If our being without Strength, would clear us from Sin, *Christ* had no occasion to die." *Rom.* v. 6. *Gal.* iii. 13. These Texts inform us, That *Christ* died for us when we were without Strength. And redeemed us from the Curse. Which are very precious and glorious Truths. But what Reason has this Man to talk in this impertinent Manner? Did he ever hear any of us attempt to excuse Sin in any Shape; or extenuate the Authority of any Command of God, on account of the Creature having imbezzled the Capacity which God gave him? Or in the least diminish the Necessity, or the Efficacy of the Sufferings of *Christ*; upon any such Consideration? What we say is this; The Law takes hold on every Creature: But not on God, in the Dispensations of his Grace.

HIS FIFTH REASON. Those who oppose Faith in *Christ* being a Duty, do acknowledge that Faith to be a Duty, which the Scripture declares is a saving Faith.

" BELIEVING the Report of the Gospel, is the true precious Faith, from which a Soul shall never fall." 1 *John* v. 1, 4, 5. *John* xx. 31. *Matt.* xvi. 15, &c.---xxiv. 24. *Act.* viii. 36, 37, 38. *Rom.* x. 8, 9. *Tit.* i. 1. 2 *Thess.* ii. 13.

14. 1 *Pet.* i. 5. But we don't pretend to determine, That this, or the other particular Thing, is every Man's Duty to believe. For we know, that to believe any Proposition, must depend upon the Clearness of the Evidence, and the Person's Capacity of Intelligence. But this is what we affirm; That the Law, which makes it the Duty of every intelligent Creature, to love God with all the Powers of his Soul; obliges every Creature to employ his Powers, in the Improvement of every Opportunity put into his Hands: And to give the utmost Attention, to whatsoever God shall be pleased to reveal to him. Therefore, it is the indispensable Duty of every Person where the Gospel comes, heedfully to attend, to that glorious Display of Wisdom and Goodness, manifested therein. And the Letter of the Gospel Revelation, is so intelligible, the Truths stated so obvious, the Evidence so clear, and the Demonstration so strong; that nothing but Indolence, Obstinacy, or some Wickedness, can prevent a Person of a common Capacity, from receiving, and approving the general Report thereof.----But suppose it was really so, as he pretends we acknowledge; that it is the Duty of every Man where the Gospel is published, to receive, and assent to every Doctrine revealed in the Bible, concerning *Christ*; this would not prove it to be the Duty of every one to be blessed with special Grace. Therefore, unless it can be made to appear, That nothing is expressed, or implied in these Texts, more than the practical Performance, or a natural embracing the Report of Gospel Truths; it is nothing at all to the Author's Purpose. But let us examine these Scriptures, and see, if no more be contained

tained therein but a *Duty Faith*: Or Faith of human Acquisition.

I. THE Faith held forth in these Scriptures, is called, *Believing with the Heart*, and *with all the Heart*. Which proves it to be the Work of God; and not the Work of Man: For, *The Preparation of the Heart in Man---is from the Lord*. And whatever any Man believes, or embraces *with all his Heart*; be it good or evil, wise or foolish; That Man feels an Impression, thereby made upon his Mind which hath an Influence upon his Affections: So, to believe in *Christ with all the Heart*, proceeds from a powerful Influence upon the Soul, thro' the Faith of the Operation of God.

II. FAITH is joined with *Sanctification of the Spirit*: And both are secured in one Settlement, *Election*: And both draw to one End, *Salvation*. Now, if Faith be included in the Grace of Election, and be a Duty; then Election must be a Duty also. For no just Law can require any Thing; unless the same Law has Authority, to require all that is necessary to the Being, or Production of that Thing: Or else, that whatever is necessary to it's Being, does already exist. And if Salvation be the certain End of Faith, and Faith be a Duty; then Salvation must be a Duty also. For that Law which can justly require any Work, has Authority to require whatever is inseparable from that Work. And it would be a harsh Contradiction, to say, It is a Duty to have *saving* Faith, and yet, Not a Duty to be *saved*. And if Believing be inseparably connected with Sanctification of the Spirit, and that Believing be a Duty; then Sanctification of the Spirit is a Duty also. For Faith, and Sanctification, are in Substance the same

same Thing: Though capable of being diversified in many Branches. Every Grace that proceeds from *Christ*, is by the Communication of the Spirit: And every Operation of the Spirit of Holiness, is a sanctifying Work: And every sanctifying Operation, is through the Faith of *Jesus*. And wherever this Faith is, there is something more than receiving the Report of the Gospel.

III. THE Source from whence this Believing proceeds; as represented in these Texts, is, *Christ revealed in his Word.---Revealed by the Father which is in Heaven.---A Message immediately sent by the Holy Spirit.---Being chosen from the Beginning.---Being born of God.---And the Word of God in the Heart.* I think, here appears something more than meer Nature: Or Dint of moral Suasion, or legal Requirements. And if any Thing appears in the Production of this Faith, beyond the Limits of created Power; then these Texts prove the very Thing which we plead for. But here is not a Word of the Creatures Performance, in all the Scriptures he produces; except confessing with the Mouth, and acknowledging of the Truth. For believing with the Heart is not the Performance of the Man: As all Persons know, who allow themselves to think deliberately. For whatever is in a Man's Power to believe, be it what it will; that Thing is no more in his Power to disbelieve, than it is in his Power to fly; until a different Impression be made upon his Judgment. Much less is believing on the Son of God, with all the Heart, any Man's proper *Act*. For to be born of God, To be drawn to *Christ* by the Father, To have his Son revealed in the Soul, To have his Word in the Heart,

To be sanctified by the Spirit, To be a new Creature, To be regenerated, To be alive unto God, To be called by Grace, To be translated into the Kingdom of God's dear Son, To be planted into *Christ*, To be begotten of God, To be quickened together with *Christ*, To be born of the Spirit, &c. Are all one, and the self-same Thing, with Believing thro' Grace; or having the Faith of the Operation of God. For each of these is expressive of that spiritual Life, which the Saints enjoy, in Union with *Christ*. But cloathed in so many different Phrases, the better to inculcate spiritual Truths into our Understandings: That what is not conveyed to our Minds by one Figure, or Metaphor; may take Place in our Conceptions by another. And if it be a Duty, expressed in one Form; the same Thing is still a Duty, in every Light wherein the Holy Ghost has expressed it. But it is revealed by the Father which is in Heaven; purely of his own Will. It is a heavenly Blessing, according to Election; secured in *Christ* before the Foundation of the World. It is the Message which the Spirit is pleased to send; according to his sovereign Will and Power. Nor is it represented in the Texts before us, as proceeding from any lower Original.

IV. THE Things believed---*That Jesus is the Christ*. To believe this with all the Heart, is nothing less than to look to him as the Anointed of God; and wait for those Anointings which *Jesus* pours forth upon the Members of his mystical Body: Which no Soul can do, but by the same Spirit wherewith *Christ* was anointed.---*That Jesus Christ is the Son of God*. This is nothing less than to submit to his Authority, delight

delight in his Grace, and trust in his All-sufficiency; as their Lord and their God. Which none can attain, but thro' divine Power.---*That God raised him from the Dead.* This is nothing less than to have the Heart fixed upon that great Salvation, which was compleated in the Resurrection of the Son of God; and to stay upon him for everlasting Life: But no Soul can so rest upon *Christ*; and with the whole Heart, embrace, and acknowledge the Truth as it is in *Jesus*, without efficacious Grace.

V. THE Blessings annexed to this Faith.---*Victory over the World.* But Victory over all Enemies, is ascribed alone to *Jesus Christ*; and to his almighty Power.---*Life through his Name.* *Jesus Christ*, who is eternal Life, is the alone Giver of Life to his People.---*To be immovably built upon the Living Rock.* But it is *Christ* himself, who says, *Upon this Rock I build my Church.* ---*Free Admission to the Ordinances of Christ.* But it is not by the Duty of Man, but by the *Wedding Garment* which *Christ* puts upon the Soul, that he is qualified for those Enjoyments.---*Salvation.* *Christ* alone is God's Salvation: No Duty of Man has any Hand therein.---*Security from Seducers.* It is not our Duties, but the Guardianship of *Christ*; whereon our Security depends.---*Kept by the Power of God.* If we be kept through Faith, by the Power of God; then a *Duty Faith* is insufficient.---Now I confess, with our Author; he that hath such a Faith, attended with such Grace, Power, and heavenly Blessings, as is represented in these Scriptures; needs not look for another. But I deny, That these glorious Things are included in a bare human Credence; or a *Duty Faith*;
Or,

Or, that any Thing is to be gathered from these Scriptures, in favour of his Argument.

HIS SIXTH REASON. Such a Faith, Repentance, Love, and Fear of God, as are no Duties required by the Law of God, can have no Concern at all in the Holiness and Happiness of Men.

“ALL Holiness of Man must be subject to the Law, because it consists in his Likeness to God.” *Gen. i. 26, 27.* This Text informs us, That God made Man IN his own Image, AFTER his Likeness. Which Image and Likeness of God, is his only begotten Son, Immanuel. *Who is the Image of the invisible God. ---Who being in the Form of God, thought it not Robbery to be equal with God.---Who being the Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person.* And in a strict and proper Sense, God has no Image but *Jesus Christ.* For every intelligent Being is capable of beholding, that Being of whom it is the proper Image. But the Light of God the Father, *No Man hath seen, nor can see.---No Man hath seen God at any Time.* Therefore no Man is the Image of God the Father, but the Man *Christ Jesus.* *The only begotten Son, which is in the Bosom of the Father. ---Who is the Beginning.---The Beginning of the Creation of God.---All Things were made by him, &c.* In this Image, and after this Likeness of God, Mankind was created. That is in the *Word made Flesh:* Bearing the same Resemblance with the *human Nature* of the *Son of God.* But Mankind in his State of Uprightness, did not bear the Image of *Christ* in his Grace, and in his Glory; as he is manifested in his Saints. For in the Manifestations of the eternal Word,

in the paradifical State ; we have no Account of any Discoveries made of him, only what related to Nature. During the Work of Creation, he is called *God* ; declaring him to be the Author of all Beings. And afterwards, fo long as Man kept his Standing, he is called, *The Lord God* ; declaring him to be fupreme Governor of all that he had made. But no Hint of any of thofe near Relations, which are manifested in the Gofpel : As Father, Husband, Life, &c. Nor could he be revealed to *Adam* in any fuch Relation : For he did not ftand in thefe Relations to all Mankind, but to his Elect only. And in what Relation foever, *Chrift* revealed himfelf to Mankind, while they ftood together in one common Head ; he muft bear that Relation, to every Individual of the human Species. Therefore, that myftical Union fubfifting between *Chrift* and his Elect, before the World was ; and the Glory which was to follow ; did not appear to Mankind in the Bulk : But is particularly revealed to each chofen Veffel, in the Time appointed of the Father. And had *Chrift* opened his grand Commiffion, and manifested himfelf in the Capacity of a Father, and Husband, to Mankind in his primitive State ; under fuch a Guardian, Man could not have fallen. Or had he been manifelt as our Life, we could not have died. Now the Manifeltations which *Chrift* is pleafed to make of himfelf, are always fuited to the Capacity beftowed on the Creature : Otherwife there could be no Enjoyment ; for all Felicity confifts in the harmonious Agreement of Objects. Therefore, In Creation, *Chrift* revealed himfelf only in his Nature-Fulnefs ; when Man only fufained his Nature-Image. In the Gof-

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pel, *Christ* discovers his Grace-Fulness; and Believers partake of his Grace-Image. At his second Coming, *Christ* will manifest his Glory-Fulness; and his Saints shall appear in his Glory-Image. Therefore, *Eph.* iv. 23, 24. *Col.* iii. 1, 10. speak nothing to the Author's Purpose: For they both speak of a practical putting on of that new Man, which was already created in the Image of *Christ*: Or putting on that new Life, which they had received from *Christ*; in Holiness of Conversation. Nor was the Apostle speaking of the Image of *Christ*, as it appeared in Creation; but as it appears in the Spirit of the Gospel: Which is an Appearance specifically different to the former. *Tit.* iii. 5. *Renewing of the Holy Ghost.* This Word relates to the Work of Regeneration: But does not by any Means oblige us to understand, Bringing back to our first *Adam* State. For to be *renewed* in *Christ*, is to partake of the special Blessings of his perfect Kingdom: Which is not composed of old Fabricks, repaired: For *Christ* is not a Mender of old Things; but he makes all Things *new*. And that it is, not only a Blessing of a different Kind, but far superior in Degree; appears from the Words immediately following, *Which be shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.*

“THE Image received by the Believer, is not another, but the same created Image.” *2 Cor.* iii. 18. *Beholding as in a Glass the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image.* Here we are informed how the Soul arrives at this Change: *By beholding.* And if it be by beholding, then the Image received, will be the very Resemblance of the same Object, as it ap-

pears through the same Medium wherein it is beheld. For a Glass receives the Image of the very same Person, who is presented to it: Which the Text informs us is, *The Glory of the Lord*. And this is not the Image of the first, but of the second *Adam*: Nor is it wrought by an Impression engraven upon our Nature, but by immediate Communication from the Lord of Glory. *Adam* received the Image in his Formation; not by beholding the Glory of the Lord. And whosoever reads this Text with Understanding, and Attention; cannot fail to see, that the true Import thereof, is utterly the Reverse of what our Author would urge therefrom. But because he finds this Word, *The same Image*; his Reader must take his Word for it: That it means the Image of the earthy *Adam*. Certainly! Had this Man a good Cause, it would appear bad, through his bad handling of it! It is pity, his Thoughts had not been a little more digested; and not turned out so exceeding raw.

“If it were not a Duty to bear the divine Image; being conformed to the World would not be a Sin.” *Rom. xii. 1, 2*. These Words were spoken to Believers, who were already blessed with the Image of *Christ*; and therefore, nothing to his Purpose. But is it an Argument, That if it be not a Duty to be blessed with the Grace-Image; it is no Sin to deface, and depart from the Purity of the Nature-Image? Just the same as to say, If it is not my Duty to be a Prince; it is no Crime to violate my Allegiance as a Subject.---“Whatever is not a Duty, can have no Goodness, Righteousness, or Truth.” *Eph. v. 9*. But is it a conclusive Argument, That because the Fruit
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of the Spirit is in all these moral Virtues; therefore the Spirit can produce no higher Fruit? Or, because these cannot be in their Purity, but as they proceed from the Spirit of Holiness; the Spirit cannot ascend to any higher Degrees of Holiness? Just as to say, Because God is in all the Earth, he cannot be in Heaven!--" All these Virtues are to be measured by the Law." *Rom. vii. 12, 14. The Law is holy---and just, and good.--The Law is spiritual.* But the Perfection of the Law, in spiritually taking hold of the Mind of Man, and condemning him in every Thing wherein he swerves from the Perfection in which he was created; is not a Proof that Man was created so excellent, that his Creator's Power and Holiness, can ascend no higher: Or produce any thing which may be holy and good, in a higher Degree. What! Did *Christ* so far spend his Treasure in the Creation, that he has not any Thing left, whereby to add a Cubit, if he pleases!--" If the Law did not require these Things, it would not be any Sin to be without them." *Rom. iv. 15.---v. 13.* We know it is no Sin, to be without these Things, whatever they be, which the Law doth not require: But this will not prove it to be no Sin, to fail in those Things, which the Law doth require. And whosoever lies under the Sin of Disobedience to the Law, is certain to perish: Unless God is pleased to save him, by that sovereign Grace, which is absolutely above the Requirement of any Law. Therefore we affirm, That *Christ* can, and does communicate to his Elect, by Grace; such Degrees of Holiness, as he did not bestow upon Man in Creation, nor ever came within the Compass of Duty. And never

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a Text here produced, has the least Tendency to prove the Contrary.

“WHATEVER is not a Duty, we may be as happy without it, as we can be with it : For we can enjoy no greater Happiness, than that Life which is promised by the Law, to the Doer of it.” *Lev. xviii. 5. Ezek. xx. 11. Rom. x. 5. Gal. iii. 12.* These Texts clearly shew, that Life is promised to the Doer of the Law : But this is no Part of the Debate. The Matter is, Whether it was the very same spiritual and eternal Life, which is given by *Christ* to his Elect ? Which is not so much as hinted in any of these Places. And some of them contain Promises made to *Israel*, when in a fallen State, relating only to the temporal Blessings of *Canaan* ; neither respecting the Life promised to Man in Uprightness, nor eternal Glory in Heaven.--“ The Tree of Life was a visible Pledge of the Life promised.” *Gen. ii. 9.* And allowing that it was a visible Pledge, of the Life promised to Man’s Obedience ; it was no Pledge of the Life which is in *Christ*. For so long as Man had free Access to that Tree ; *Christ* was unknown to him : And when *Christ* was revealed, Man was banished from the Tree. And if it can illustrate any Thing in the present Case ; it is, That the Life then in Existence, and the Life since manifested in *Christ* ; are specifically different. For notwithstanding, it might in some Sense be a Sign, or Shadow of *Christ* : How can that which vanisheth away, be a *Pledge* of that which continueth to Eternity ?

“ IF the Enjoyment of God in Heaven was not promised to Obedience ; then eternal Death in Hell was not threatned to Disobedience.”

Psal.

GOD'S ELECT, &c. 195

Pfal. lxxiii. 25. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee?*
Matt. xxv. 41. *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting Fire.* These Words contain nothing to prove, or disprove his Assertion. But it is very arrogant: Unless he can measure Heaven, and Hell, and the Ways of God. Does he know who gave this Law to the infinite eternal *Jehovah*; That unless he first promised, the highest of all Holiness and Happiness, Glory and Enjoyment, to Man's Obedience; he should not have Authority to render to the Disobedient, Punishment proportionate to their Crimes? All Grace, Glory, Holiness, Happiness, Life, Enjoyment of God, &c. are pure Blessings, proceeding from God alone, of his rich Bounty, and no other Way. Obedience has sometimes been made the Condition of the Continuance of Blessings, after God has freely bestowed them. But it cannot be proved that Obedience to God's Law, or any good Works, or practical Holiness, ever had any Influence, towards the Advancement of any Creature, to the Enjoyment of any Blessing whatsoever. Therefore, unless it can be proved, that Man was in the actual Enjoyment of the felicitous Fruition of God in Heaven, before the Fall; it is an idle Dream, to talk of any such Thing being promised, any otherwise than in *Christ*, to his Elect, as Heirs of Glory.

“THE same eternal Life that is preached by *Jesus Christ*, is promised to the Doer of the Law.” *Matt.* xix. 16, 17. *Luke* x. 25, 26, 27, 28. Here we have the Account of two Men, who enquired of *Christ*, what they should do to inherit eternal Life: And he referred them both to the keeping of the Law: And particularly to the latter, he said, *This do and thou*

thou shalt live. But these Passages are so far from putting the Matter forever out of all Dispute, as he pretends they will; that nothing at all can be gathered from thence, in favour of his Argument. For *Jesus* did not tell them any such Thing; as, That the *same Life* was promised to, or was to be obtained by Obedience to the Law. And it is undeniable, They were grossly ignorant of that Life; which is *Christ* himself: And as ignorant of the Way to it: Forasmuch as they thought to obtain it by their own Doings. And there is no Appearance of his instructing either of them in the least: But that he answered them ironically, according to their Folly: And sent them away as ignorant as they came. For they were wicked Men; and so far as we can learn, they continued so. One was a covetous Worldling, unjustly refusing to render back the Riches which God had lent him: A dissembling Hypocrite, pretending to be ready to do, *any Thing*; and one Thing being required, he refused it. The other was an Enemy, and asked the Question, to tempt the Lord. So, all that can be gathered from his Answers to them, is this, That he did not cast his Pearls before these Swine.---“ The Deficiency is in Man’s Obedience; it is not any Deficiency in the Law, that is the Reason why it cannot give Life.” *Rom. ii. 13.---viii. 3. Psal. cxix. 96.* His Position is true: None of us deny it: And these Texts confirm it. But this is nothing at all to the Purpose; unless it could be proved, That the Life promised by the Law, to the Doer of it; is the very same Life which the Saints enjoy in *Christ*.

“ IF eternal Life was not promised in the Law, then *Christ*, by his Obedience to the Law

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Law in our stead, could not procure eternal Life for us." *Rom. v. 9, 19, 21.---viii. 3.---x. 4. Tit. iii. 7. 1 Cor. i. 30. Lev. xxv. 23, 24, &c. Heb. ix. 15.* We always assert, that *Christ* by his Obedience, procured for his Church, all that they lost by Disobedience; and we constantly deny, that he procured those Things which were above being lost: As the Love of God the Father, mystical Union with *Christ*, the Grace of the Holy Ghost, and eternal Life, Glory, and Felicity, which is *Christ* himself: Therefore, as we never pretend that *Christ* did (in a proper Sense) procure eternal Life for us, the Author might have spared this Argument. But I shall examine his Quotations. *By the Obedience of one, shall many be made righteous.---Being now justified by his Blood.* To be justified from Sin, and made righteous in a Law Sense; is an Acquittance from the Sentence of Death. Which Death must have been a Privation of Life; and consequently a Privation, or Prevention of all Enjoyments. Therefore, thro' the Blood of *Christ*, it may be said (in an improper Sense) we enjoy eternal Life and Glory; tho' it is not procured thereby. But Deliverance from the Gulph of Misery, which interposed, was properly obtained by *Christ's* Obedience unto Death. *That being justified by his Grace, we should be made Heirs according to the Hope of eternal Life.* Justification by Grace, is here laid down as the Way to the Heirship; for as Sin had interposed, the Children could not come to the actual Enjoyment of their Inheritance, without Justification from Condemnation: But it is not by Justification from Sin, that they become Heirs in Point of Right: But by Virtue of an indissoluble Union with

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Christ,

Christ, they are Heirs of God: And through Justification by Grace, they are set free from every Obstacle, that hindered their Access to that eternal Life, already residing in the Son of God. And reading these Words in Conjunction with those foregoing, they shew how Abundance of Grace has been extended, to accomplish the grand Design. *Even so might Grace reign through Righteousness unto eternal Life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.* These Words compared with what goes before, shews that Grace has abounded much more than Sin abounded. Therefore, it does not only reign through the Righteousness of Justification, to a Deliverance from the threatned Death; but also through the Righteousness of Adoption, and vital Union, to a Co-heirship with *Christ* in Glory. *Christ is the End of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth.---Who is of God made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption.* It is a glorious Truth, That *Christ* is the Righteousness of his People. But is it an Argument, That because *Christ* is the End of the Law; therefore, the Law is the End of *Christ*? Or, That because *Christ* went as far in his Obedience, as the Law went in it's Demands; therefore, the Law went as far in it's Demands, as *Christ* was able to go in the Riches of his Grace? Or, That because *Christ* procured Redemption for us, by his Obedience to the Law; therefore, he cannot endow us with any other Blessing, but what he must procure by Obedience? For if these Scriptures do not prove something to this Purpose, they are foreign to the Author's Argument. *Redemption of the Inheritance that was sold.* This relates to what is supposed to have been in actual Possession;

Possession: For they could not sell what they never had. The People of God are said to have sold themselves, and to be redeemed; and are now called, *The purchased Possession*. But does the Author quote this, to shew that they had sold eternal Glory? It never was at their Disposal: Nor ever was alienated, or redeemed. *That the Righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit.* This is a rich Blessing indeed! But the Words do not inform us, That to fulfil the Righteousness of the Law, is the utmost Extent that *Christ* can do by his Grace. *That by Means of Death, for the Redemption of the Transgressions* (that is his People from those Transgressions) *that were under the first Testament, they which are called might receive the Promise of eternal Inheritance.* The Death of *Christ*, for the Redemption of his People, is here noted, as the Means of their receiving the Promise; or the fulfilling of the Promise of that eternal Inheritance, secured in *Christ* for them: Which is the same Thing with the Hope of eternal Life. But it was God's Elect, and not the Inheritance prepared for them, that was redeemed. Nor is there the least Appearance of the Inheritance of Glory, ever being promised to Man's Obedience, lost by Sin, or procured by *Christ*'s Obedience. The whole Scheme is a meer Fiction. For if we were Heirs of the heavenly Glory, or had it in Promise, without *Christ*; but having lost it; are now made joint Heirs of the same Glory with *Christ*; then we are not come into *Christ*'s Kingdom, but he into ours: And has paid himself for our Redemption, with Part of our Inheritance.---“ Those who will have a Faith

and a Righteousness, which the Law of God doth not require of us, must look out for another *Jesus*, another Spirit; and another Gospel." 2 Cor. xi. 4. This has nothing to do with the Argument; only finding it in the Number, I mention it; wishing all that oppose our Author's Sentiments, may give better Demonstration of their Acquaintance with the Fulness of the true *Jesus*, the Power of the Spirit, and the Glory of the Gospel, than he appears to do.----" Our Impotency will not excuse us from Obedience, or dissolve our Obligations to God." 2 Cor. iii. 5. *Psal.* x. 4. *Prov.* xxiv. 9. *John* xv. 5. *Eph.* ii. 12. *Heb.* ii. 1, 2, 3. *Rom.* v. 6.---iv. 15. What he here attempts to prove, is what none of us denies. And these Texts hold forth the Evil of Sin, the Plague of the Heart, the miserable Estate, and Insufficiency of Man without *Christ*; they prove the absolute Necessity of a Work of omnipotent Grace; above the Nature of Duties, legal Obligations, or Creature Attainments; to save such a wretched Worm. But there is not the Appearance of a Hint, in any of these Scriptures, to favour any Part of his Argument; except that which he has cited over and again, concerning *giving Heed*, not to *neglect so great Salvation*, &c. which is spoken to Believers, and relates to the practical Part; concerning which we never contend. And if his Design be to amuse the Ignorant, by raising a Shew of Contention, about Things which we never oppose, I shall leave him to take the Contention to himself.

HIS SEVENTH REASON. It is no where declared in the Word of God, That Faith in *Christ* is not a Duty.

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ROM. x. 10. *For with the Heart Man believeth unto Righteousness, and with the Mouth Confession is made unto Salvation.* Therefore, since I cannot believe with my Heart any Thing relating to the Kingdom of God, which is not written in the Word of God; or may be justly gathered, and concluded from what is written therein; and I cannot find any Thing in the sacred Oracles, in favour of the Faith of God's Elect, being a Creature's Duty; I choose to hold the Negative, till the Positive shall be found written. *Acts xvii. 11. And searched the Scriptures daily, whether those Things were so.* Therefore, since I am not to take any Man's Word for it, but to search the Scriptures, to find the Truth in the Testimony of God; I shall not build upon our Author's Testimony: Who after his above forty Years Search, has not been able to produce one, *Thus saith the Lord*; from whence an Argument can be fairly drawn, in favour of his Scheme.

I ALSO can say, That for near forty Years I have been a Searcher (at least a Reader) of the Holy Scriptures. And I confess, That for many Years of that Time, Had the Question been asked me, Whether Faith in *Christ* was a commanded Duty? And whether I found it so written? I should have returned a precipitant Answer, in the Affirmative. And it is no uncommon Thing, through Want of diligent Attention to what we read, and Want of distinguishing Judgment; for Persons to have their Minds so prepossessed, with what they hear in the common Run; from Conversation, Authors, and Pulpits; that they are verily perswaded, they have read those Things in the Bible; though they could never tell where.

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But thro' the Goodness of God, upon more mature Examination, I am convinced of my Mistake. And if ever our Author is brought to search the Scriptures, in a real humble intelligent Manner; I make no Doubt, but he may yet be convinced of his Mistake. For what Reason have I to dispute the Goodness of my heavenly Father, to fulfil a gracious Promise to him, as well as he has done to me? *The Heart also of the RASH shall understand Knowledge.*

HIS EIGHTH REASON. The only Argument produced to prove, that Faith in *Christ* is not a Duty, is both unscriptural, and utterly destructive of all true Religion.

“ If this Argument be true, That what *Adam* never had nor lost, nor we in him; cannot be required from us as his Offspring; hereby, the whole Undertaking, Obedience, Sacrifice, and Satisfaction of *Christ* for us, is totally subverted for ever.” *Rom. viii. 3, 4. x. 4. Gal. iii. 13, 14. iv. 4, 5.* The glorious Truths contained in these Texts, are very strong and conclusive, in Favour of our Argument. For if *Christ* came, *To redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons.* Then he must redeem them from that Bondage, which a Duty Faith, or that Faith which is required by the Law, will naturally gender to. For so long as they are under Threats of Damnation, for not performing what the Law requires; it is evident they are not redeemed from under the Law: And while they are under the legal Dispensation, they cannot enjoy the spiritual Liberty of the Sons of God. And if *Christ* be, *The End of the Law*; he must be the

the End of that legal Faith, by bestowing that Faith which is of pure Grace, the Gift and of the Operation of God. And if, *What the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the Flesh, God sending his own Son, &c.* hath so far prevailed, *That the Righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us.* Then that Grace of Christ, whereby this Operation is wrought, must be of a superior Nature, to that moral Principle which the Law requires. For as God gave to Man, a natural Principle, and Power of Action, the Law required him to exert that Power, for the Preservation of that perfect Rectitude, wherein God had created him. And had that Power been rightly employed, it was sufficient to the Purpose; and was all that the Law required. But consider, That Power which is sufficient to preserve a Man from falling, is not sufficient to raise him up, when fallen. That Power, which is able to defend a City, may not be sufficient to recover it out of the Hand of an Enemy. That Supply which is sufficient to support Life, is not sufficient to restore Life to the Dead. So; the Principle of human Power, which was sufficient to have preserved moral Purity, is not sufficient to restore it, when lost; as the Author acknowledges. Therefore, that Grace Power, or divine Principle, whereby the Righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in the Saints; is superior to any Thing that was in Nature, or that the Law did ever require. For how excellent soever the human Nature was, it must be impossible, when once it was depraved, to have it's Purity restored, without a Principle superior to what itself ever had been. And this superior Principle is the Faith of Jesus, whereby
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the Righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in the Believer. For Faith worketh by Love, which is the Fulfilling of the Law; and by Faith the Heart is purified, the Soul is sanctified, and the Conscience cleansed from Pollution. (*) And if, *Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law.---That the Blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ.* Then it is no more of Law Requirements. For if the *Inheritance be of the Law, it is no more of Promise: But God gave it to Abraham by Promise.* Thus I conceive the Texts last cited, are a strong Testimony in favour of efficacious Grace, without the Works of the Law.

THE Author's concluding Words :

“ AND thus you see, that this dangerous
 “ and scriptureless Argument has a direct Ten-
 “ dency to sap the Foundations, and totally
 “ subvert all true Religion : For it equally,
 “ and unavoidably serves the Cause, and justi-
 “ fies the Principles and Practices of the *Deist*,
 “ *Socinian*, *Arminian*, *Antinomian*, and *Libertine*,
 “ and saves us the Labour of disputing any
 “ longer, whether it is our Duty to believe in
 “ *Christ*; for it leaves us no *Christ* to believe
 “ in, nor any Thing for which to believe in
 “ him. And therefore, it is high Time for all
 “ those who love the Lord *Jesus Christ* in Sin-
 “ cerity, to unite together as one Man, in an
 “ immovable Endeavour to bury this dangerous
 “ Argument for ever out of their Sight; and

(*) *Gal.* v. 6, 14. *Acts* xv. 9. xxvi. 18. *1 Tim.* i. 5. *1 Job.* iii. 3.

“ say,

“ say, with one Consent, *I will make thy Grave,*
 “ *for thou art vile*; and may the Lord give Com-
 “ *mandment concerning thee, that no more of thy*
 “ *Name be sown.*” Nabum i. 14.

THIS Quotation has no immediate Concern with the Argument, and therefore I shall not make any Remark upon it, only, That the Words were a Threatning; which he hath turned into a Prayer: But here, my Reader may observe the Reason, why I chose rather to reconnoitre than closely engage this Champion. And since he imagines he has made so great a Slaughter, I shall now leave him burying his Dead: Hoping those that escape his Hand, will still go and preach the Kingdom of God.

C H A P. V.

An APPEAL, To the Judgment of such Persons as it may concern, to think for themselves; concerning the Author's Performance, the Strength and Usefulness of his Reasoning.

FIRST, To the JUDICIOUS.

I AM very sensible, that to transcribe the most material Sentences from an Author, or in few Words to sum up what we conceive to be the main Design of his Arguments; cannot convey so full and intelligible an Idea thereof, as the Perusal of the whole Performance: Nor can a Person so thoroughly judge, whether a fair and full Answer be given; without a diligent Examination of the whole, on both Sides. Therefore, tho' I have endeavoured to represent the Author's Reasoning, in as full and
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just a Light as I could; I should be glad, that all that are willing, seriously to peruse the foregoing Pages, would also read *The Question answered*, &c. And if I have not duly understood it; I refer myself to your Judgment, and Candour; to determine what Meaning his Words convey, and in what Sense his Reasoning is to be understood.

I. WHAT is the Faith he contends about? Can it be determined from what he hath said, Whether it be only a bare Assent to, or receiving the Report of the Gospel? as his fifth Argument appears to intend; but seems to be denied, P. 11, 13. Or whether it be a practical Work? as is suggested, P. 13, 14. and the contrary is called a wicked Work, rejecting *Christ*, setting at nought his Salvation, P. 18, Or whether it be a Principle of divine Grace? as he asserts, P. 6, 7, 22, 28, 29. For he calls it, The Gift of God---A commanded Duty---The Grace of Faith---A Work---A Fruit of the Spirit---An Act---Not of ourselves, &c. He says, "The Works which God doth---can never be done by any Creature." P. 24.---"The Gift of God---and the Duty of Men are not two different Kinds of Faith," P. 35. He adds, "Under two different Considerations." But are they two different Things? After calling it, The Gift of God, a Fruit of the Spirit of *Christ*; he says, "The Act and Work of the very same Faith, is required by the moral Law." But is the Act and Work something distinct from the Faith, or the very same Thing? I intreat the Favour of those who have distinguishing Eyes, to define his Meaning, and determine what the very Thing is, which is intended by *saving Faith*.

II. WHAT

II. WHAT is that Law by which he says this Faith is required? Is it properly the Covenant of Works, which promises Life to Obedience, and threatens Damnation to Disobedience? All his second Argument runs this Way; which seems confirmed by his Saying, It is required of 'Unbelievers, under the Power of a carnal Mind, P. 24. And this should appear to be his Meaning, where he tells us, It is the *Gospel* that requires it, for he says, "It dooms them to the heaviest Punishment." P. 14. But he speaks of the Law, as taken into the Hand of *Christ*, and made the Instrument of his Government as King of *Zion*, P. 27, which conveys a quite different Idea, and supposes the Subjects to be under Grace, and governed by the Law of Liberty. And this should seem to be his Meaning, when he argues, That it is not required independent of the Grace of God, P. 44. And many of his Scripture Quotations pertain to Believers only; and yet the Strain of his Book seems to point out an Obligation upon unconverted Sinners. Therefore, What am I to understand by the Law he speaks of?

III. WHERE does he lay the Foundation of this Law Requirement? For he suggests, That Man in his State of Innocency had a Capacity to comply with this Obligation. P. 6. And the former Part of his sixth Argument runs wholly upon this; to prove the Obligation upon Mankind, on Account of his having been possessed of the same Principle, in his Creation. But again he asserts, "That those Things are required which we never had Power to perform. And this is the Subject of his eighth Argument; where he raises so many dreadful Con-

sequences, and loads us with so many horrible Accusations; for denying, That God requires from his Creatures, that which he never gave unto them. I confess, if either of these Arguments be true, the other (in my humble Opinion) is only vain Jangling. But I refer it to better Judgment, to determine, Whether his Design is, That God has a Right to require it, because Power had been bestowed; or because he requires, and punishes in an arbitrary Way, without any Regard to Obligations, or the Creature's Capacity?

IV. WHAT is the main Design of his whole Performance? Is it designed for Ministers, to move them to preach Faith as a Duty? And if so, while he acknowledges it is not in Man's Power, what Encouragement can a Minister have, to call upon poor Sinners to perform Impossibilities? Is it a Minister's Duty to preach so as to deceive Souls, by making them believe it is in their Power, when he knows it is not? And if he continues calling upon them to believe, and have Faith; and at the same Time informs them, that it is not in their Power; which Way must the poor Creature look? And if he truly informs them, That *Christ* is the Author and Finisher of Faith; That it is the Gift of God, and not of ourselves; to what End does he call upon Creatures to perform it? But some say, Faith is to be urged upon Sinners, as a Duty, in order to whet their Desires after it. But then, If they do not know how impracticable the Performance is; will it not rather whet their Minds into a Spirit of Bondage; and their Endeavours into a seeking the Living among the Dead; than to draw their Souls to look to *Jesus*? And if their Eyes
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be open, to see how far the Work is beyond their Power; is it not in Danger to fill the Soul with Distraction; to find itself call'd upon, commanded, and pressed with Terrors and Threatnings, to make Bricks without Straw, or perform Impossibilities? And how can the Gospel of *Christ* be Glad Tidings, preached in such a Light? Again some say, Sinners are to be call'd upon to have Faith in *Christ*; to convince them of their Need of it. But did *Moses* drive *Israel* into the *Red Sea*, and command them to wade the Waters; to convince them of their Need of *the Salvation of the Lord*? It is true, The Elders of *Israel* took a Method, which tended to convince the People, of their Need of God's Presence; when they counselled them to obtain Salvation, by fetching the Ark of God to the Camp: But it proved a dear Experiment. So *Ahab's* Prophets stimulated him, to that which might convince him, of the Need there was to have the *Syrians* driven from *Ramoth*; but the Experiment was rash, and the Instruction came too late. And is it not a more likely Means, to convince poor Sinners of their Need of a lively Faith; to open to them the Scriptures, by setting forth the Perfection of God's Law, the Holiness of the supreme Being, and the wretched, helpless, hopeless Condition of perishing Sinners; and then to represent to them the unsearchable Riches, and All-sufficiency of a Saviour *Jesus*; than by urging them to try impracticable Experiments? Some say, They must be called upon to have Faith, and to believe in *Christ*; to convince them of their own Weakness to perform it. But while a Sinner finds himself commanded, exhorted, and driven with Threatnings, to believe

lieve in *Christ*, to have Faith in *Christ*, to come savingly to *Christ*, &c. Does this naturally tend to convince him that it is not in his Power; or to cause him to take it for granted, that God supposes it in his Power; and therefore to conclude, he shall certainly find the Power in himself? If it be said, It is to put him upon the Tryal, thereby to convince himself. So the Sons of *Sceva* put themselves upon the Tryal, to cast out Devils; and I suppose they were convinced of their *Want of Power*: But will any one say, It was a wise Attempt? And is it not rather, the Way for a Soul to distress and confound himself? To cause him to lade himself with thick Clay, to labour in the Fire, and weary himself for very Vanity? All Mankind find it a Nature Principle, to expect something from themselves: And which is the more probable Means to convince them of their Insufficiency, by commanding them to perform the Work themselves; or by directing them immediately to the Son of God, in whom all Fulness dwells? But it is said, "They are not obliged to perform it independent of the Grace of God." But he that is destitute of Faith, is destitute of the Grace of God. And then, To what Purpose is it to admonish Persons to an Impossibility, before God affords his Grace? And he that is blessed with Grace in his Soul, is blessed with Faith, for they are the same Thing, at least inseparable: And to what Purpose is a Person commanded to have a Thing, after God has given it to him? If it be said, It is needful to continue exhorting Persons to the Work of Faith, to prevent them from being slothful; I ask, Is there not enough for Persons to do, which is within the Compass of the Creature,

Creature, and is undeniably their Duty, to which they may be exhorted; without exhorting them to perform the Works peculiar to God, which can never be done by any Creature? Whether is it more likely to produce Diligence in the Husband Man, to admonish him of his proper Duty, in the Tillage of his Field; or to exhort and command him to bring Showers, and cause Sun-gleams? And which will more influence a Sailor, to exert the Power which God has given him; to be admonished of the necessary Preparations which are to be made on board his Ship; or to be driven and commanded, to direct the Wind and Tide? Will a slothful Servant sooner become diligent, if he be instructed into the Nature of his proper Business, with the Necessity, Usefulness, and Seasons it is to be performed; or if he be commanded to bring the Day-light; and beaten because he does not make the Sun rise, whereby he might begin his Work more early? Now, since the Faith of God's Elect is a Blessing immediately from God, *Not of him that willeth, nor of him that ruineth*; Is it not sufficient to baffle any Creature, to be teased and driven to a Performance, or Thing, so unattainable? If it be said, To be taught that it is our Duty to believe, tends to keep us humble; I ask, Which is the more probable Way to lead Persons to Humility; by telling them, God requires what was never given, and will damn them for Want of what Mankind never had; or by laying before them, The Equity of all God's Commandments, the Justice of all his Dispensations, and the unmeasurable Riches of Grace in *Christ*, that when we were utterly incapable of taking a Step, towards our own Deliverance

liverance from Misery, his own Arm brought Salvation, and he hath *wrought all our Works in us*? And if it be said, To be perswaded that Faith is a Duty, is the Way to magnify the Grace of God, in leading us to see the Goodness of *Christ*, in fulfilling it for us; I ask, Whether is the Grace of God more magnified, in being represented as just coming up to the Measure of the earthy Man, restoring what he lost, and performing what he was bound to, and no more; or in being displayed in it's Aboundings and Superaboundings, through the Lord from Heaven; above all the Degrees of Sin, Duty, or created Nature?

SECONDLY, *To the AUTHOR's Admirers.*

WHEREIN do you experience the Advantage of his Scheme?

I. DOES it convey the most clear Conceptions of the Perfection of God's Law? I find *Christ* and his Apostles represent the Law as a perfect System: A compleat Transcript of the Will of God, in his Requirements; and of the Duty of Mankind, to his great Benefactor. They explain the Purity, Justice, Equity, Holiness, and Goodness thereof: And the Reasonableness of all it's Demands; according to the Relation in which the Creature stands, to God; and the Capacity with which God has blessed him: So as the Glory of the Legislator shines most conspicuous; and the Law itself appears most excellent; and worthy to stand as *Jehovah's* Ensign, and royal Standard for ever. But are your Souls led to magnify the Equity and Perfection, Majesty and Justice of this Law; and to admire and adore the Wisdom,
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and Goodness of the Law-giver; by being told, That this Law requires from us, what we never had; commands us to perform, what never was in our Power; and damns Souls for not doing that Work, which none can do but God alone?

II. DOES it present to you the brightest Discoveries of Gospel Grace? The Gospel appears as a pure System of glad Tidings; a rich Manifestation of the Will of God, in his Goodness, boundless Love, and Purposes of Grace; with the great Salvation, spiritual Grace, and eternal Glory, to be enjoyed by the Church, in *Christ Jesus* our Lord. And in this glorious Manifestation of divine Grace, *Christ* is represented as the alone, all-sufficient, and everlasting Saviour: And not only so, but the Husband, Head, and Life of his mystical Body, the Church: And consequently, his elect Body is his Wife, his Companion, his Delight, and Partaker of all the Glory which the Father hath given him, And in this Relation, his Children are not only raised up, from the unfathomable Depths of Sin, Misery, Wretchedness, and eternal inexpressible Woe; but also raised up, to sit together in heavenly Places in *Christ Jesus*: Not as Servants, but as Sons and Heirs of God; not bearing the Image of the Earthy, but of the Heavenly; not in the *Eden* Paradise, but in the Midst of the Paradise of God. And herein a Glory shines, not only to the magnifying and honouring God's Holy Law, but to the revealing of that stupendous Mystery which from the Beginning of the World was hid in God; and is far above all that ever was under the Command of the Law, or discoverable by the Law, or is possible to

be understood by any Soul, while he is under the first Covenant. For the Law was equal to the utmost Excellency of the Creature, which was governed thereby; but the Glory thereof is comparatively extinguished, so as there appears no Glory in it, by reason of the Super-excellency of the Gospel Glory. But are your Souls more drawn forth, to behold and admire, the rich Grace, and resplendent Glory displayed in the Gospel; by being told, "That no spiritual Blessing can be bestowed by *Christ*, of a higher Nature than what was a Duty, upon the Principles of meer Creature-ship." And that this Gospel requires (or is preached in Conjunction with the Law which requires) you to perform the spiritual Blessings in your own Souls, yourselves; with Threats of Misery and Damnation? And that after all, you shall never enjoy any higher Degree of Holiness, Happiness, Life, or Glory in *Christ*, than what was once in the Creature's Power, to have attained by his own Obedience?

III. DOES it give you the clearest Idea, of the sweet harmonious Concord between the Law and the Gospel? They are perfectly distinct without Confusion, and yet they completely harmonize without Opposition. The former fully sets forth the Obligations, which the Creature is under to his great Benefactor; the abominable Nature of Sin; and the Guilt, Wrath, and Misery which is inseparable therefrom: The latter fully declares, *Christ* to be the Fulfiller of all the Obligations of the Law, the Exterminator of Sin, and the Author of Mercy, Peace, and Salvation. Thus the Gospel is magnified by the Law, and the Law is established by the Gospel. But are your Souls
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led to the due Distinction, by being told, sometimes, That Faith is an immediate Blessing of Gospel Grace; and sometimes, That it is a direct Requirement of the Law? Sometimes, That it is required of the reasonable Creature, without Exception or Limitation; and sometimes, That it is not required independent of the Grace of God? Or does it convey an enlarged Conception, of the Harmony of Law and Gospel; while the Law is represented as intermeddling with those Things, which belong to the sole Prerogative of the Gospel? Requiring, and threatening Damnation; concerning those Things which relate to the Peace of the Gospel; which the Law never was so much as able to reveal: Instead of setting forth the Law, as demanding perfect Holiness and Righteousness, from the Man; and the Gospel, in a sovereign Way proclaiming in *Christ*, that Grace which shall answer all the Demands of the Law; to the mutual glorifying of both?

IV. DOES this Doctrine raise the most exalted Conceptions, and lead you to the clearest Understanding of the Righteousness, Sacrifice, Atonement, and Satisfaction made by the Blood of *Christ*; by telling you, That unless the Law requires from us, those Things which never were possible to Mankind; then *Christ* had no Occasion to die: And so his Sufferings, and all that he did in our Redemption, is an idle Dream? The Gospel represents *Christ*, as bearing our Transgressions, dying for our Sins, and redeeming his People by his own Blood. But cannot we behold a Substance in this Redemption, or any Thing to be redeemed from, nor any Sin which made *Christ's* Sufferings necessary; in all our Departings from God, in all

our Rebellions, or in all our Violations of his Holy Law, unless we must bring Impossibilities into the Account? And if *Christ* did not purchase Faith, but communicate it from his own Fulness; will no Glory appear, in his purchasing his Church with his own Blood?

V. DOES it more clearly illustrate the gracious Operations of the Spirit of Holiness? The whole Volume of the Scripture, which from Beginning to End testifies of *Jesus Christ*, was written by the Dictation of the Holy Ghost. And when the Spirit of Grace is pleased to attend the Word of the Testimony of *Jesus*, opening the Heart to receive it, and causing it to enter the Soul with Power; then the Understanding apprehends the Glory, Grace, mediatorial Excellency, and Sufficiency of the Son of God: The Affections are filled with Love to him, and powerfully drawn towards him; and the Will bows down to his Sceptre. Thus Faith cometh by hearing: And *Christ* becomes the Object of the Soul's Delight, his Hope, his Joy, his Life, and his Salvation, through the Energy of the Holy Spirit, in the Word of Grace; entering the Soul, and causing all the Powers of the Mind to embrace the Truth, as it is in *Jesus*. And through this efficacious Manifestation of *Christ*, all the Fruits of the Spirit are produced in the Soul: For it is not a transient, but a perpetual Manifestation, of *Jesus* in his Fulness; whereby there is a perpetual Communication of everlasting Life to the Soul: And from hence proceeds every Thing that is spiritual and holy, in Heart and Conversation. But are your Hearts influenced to magnify the Grace of the Holy Spirit, in the highest Degree, by being told, That all the

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Work which he performs in the Soul, is no more than Mankind in his upright State, was able to have done for himself; but Man having failed in Conduct, the Spirit of Grace barely supplies the Creature's Deficiency: Or by having his Grace represented in the Scripture Light; shed on us abundantly, revealing the deep Things of God, and producing Rivers of Living Water in the Soul?

VI. DOES it raise in your Minds higher Conceptions of the heavenly Glory, warmer Desires after it, and greater Joy in Hopes of it; to be told, That it was a Reward proportioned, and promised to the Obedience of Creatures; but being lost, or missed by their Disobedience, is now restored by *Christ*: Than if it be represented as it is; an Habitation and a Glory, peculiar to *Christ* and his Church, prepared from the Foundation of the World, an Inheritance incorruptible, a Kingdom which cannot be moved? For if the Kingdom of Glory was promised as a Reward to Man's Obedience, it must be intended for all Mankind; and if *Christ* restored it to a Part of Mankind, and not to every Individual of the human Species, he must have been a *deficient Saviour*; forasmuch as he did not procure that Kingdom for all, and give it to all for whom it was designed: And then the glorious Kingdom would for ever remain, as an Habitation half in Ruins. I know, some Persons suggest, That the vacant Seats of the fallen Angels shall be supplied by Mankind; but they do not tell us what kind of Beings shall come next, to supply the vacant Seats of fallen Men; whom *Christ* doth not restore. But can such undigested Imaginations, fill your Souls with more solid Joy, than a substantial

stantial View of a consummate Kingdom of Glory, eternally invariable from the perfect Plan, in the infinite Mind of *Jehovah*; and in due Season, all the Glory thereof compleated, without any Deficiency, in the least Punctilio of the Grand Design?

VII. DOES this Doctrine give you better Understanding, or lead you into a better Method to obtain this Faith? For none can come spiritually to *Christ* but by Faith, nor can any Heart be purified, or any Work performed, which can be pleasing to God without it. But is the Obtainment thereof facilitated to your Souls, by being told, That it is a Duty, a Work which God requires from you; and threatned with Misery and Damnation, for not doing it: Or, by being informed, That Faith cometh by Hearing, and Hearing by the Word of God; through the Power of the Lord opening the Heart, to receive the immortal Seed; which being watered and nourished by the Holy Ghost, bringeth forth all the Fruits of a living Faith in *Christ*: And so being directed to wait for the Blessing, from the Fountain of all Grace?

VIII. Do you find this Doctrine most effectual, in moving you to Obedience, Diligence, Watchfulness, and Holiness of Conversation? For, That Doctrine which is most genuine, must be most conducive to promote practical Godliness. For the main Design of the Gospel Revelation, is the bringing of God's People to a Conformity to *Christ*; therefore, whatever has the strongest Tendency towards obtaining that End, is the true Counsel of God. But does it cause you to run with the greatest Joy, Vigour, and steady Chearfulness in the Ways
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of God; to be told, That Faith in *Christ* is a commanded Duty; and notwithstanding it is utterly out of your Power; and never was, nor will be performed by any Creature; yet, it is required upon Pain of eternal Damnation; or, to be told, That *Christ* brings all glad Tidings; comes not to bind, but to undo all heavy Burdens; not driving to Impossibilities, and imposing impracticable Tasks; but proclaiming Liberty, opening blind Eyes, binding up the broken hearted, comforting the Mourner, saving that which was lost, plucking Brands out of the Fire, giving Power to them that have no Might, and sending forth Streams of Grace, and Salvation; and Life from the Dead?

ONLY this would I learn of you, Do you receive the Spirit of Love and Holiness, by the Preaching of the Faith of Duties, Law Requirements, Obligations, Commands, Acts, Works, Performances, &c. enforced with Threatnings, and Denunciations of Wrath; or by the Gospel of the Grace of God, proclaiming everlasting Salvation by the Blood of *Jesus*, and Faith as a divine Blessing, flowing from the Fountain of Life, to the filling of the Soul with all the Fulness of God? I am very sensible, what Fermentations of Passion may be raised, by crying up the Duty of Faith, the Necessity of Believing; and the damning Sin of Not-believing; calling upon Persons to come to *Christ*, close in with the Tenders of Mercy, accept the Offers of Grace, and embrace the Opportunity; with the Sin and Danger of neglecting, &c. But can those Souls who experience the Faith of the Operation of God, declare, That it was by this kind of Doctrine, they were called out of Darkness,
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into the Light of Life: Or by the Word of Grace, distilling like Dew, and dropping like Rain upon their Souls, in a simple Declaration of the Fulness of Grace, and Salvation in *Christ*? I do not ask, Whether God was ever pleased to bless his Word of Grace to a Soul, from the Mouths of those Ministers, who frequently mix and confound the Gospel with the Law: But whether those Souls whom God hath brought into the true Liberty, can declare, That they received the Blessing, by the Doctrine which gendereth to Bondage? Perhaps you will say, I go off the Point; for that you are not for legal, but evangelical Doctrine. But are Duties required by the Law, under Threats of Punishment and Damnation, evangelical Doctrine? But some say, Notwithstanding evangelical Doctrine is the Means, whereby *Christ* is revealed; yet the Law is to be preached, to convince Sinners of their lost Condition. When Persons talk of *preaching the Law*; we may suppose it an Inadvertency, for Want of duly considering the true Import of the Word, *Preaching*: Which is commonly taken for holding forth the Subject, or main Matter, which the Preacher would chiefly recommend to his Audience: In which Sense, no faithful Minister of *Christ* ever preaches the Law. But the Dispute is not, Whether the Holy Law is to be expounded, in the fullest and clearest Light; and represented to Sinners in the Strictness of it's Commands, the Spirituality of it's Extent, the Severity of it's Threatnings, and the Irreverfableness of it's Sentence, to convince them of their depraved Nature, and miserable Estate. But the Question is, Whether the Law is to be preached, as having Dominion and Authority

to bind unto that Faith, by which alone, the Conscience can be delivered from the Bondage of the Law? Or, Whether this be the genuine Means of bringing Deliverance to the Sinner? But some say, the Law is to be preached to Believers, to influence them to a holy Life. But the Question is not, Whether the Law of God, and Commandments of *Christ*, are to be opened, and pressed by the most forcible Arguments, as a Rule to the People of God, to order their Conversation aright, to glorify God, and walk worthy of *Christ*, in all holy Conversation and Godliness. But whether legal Doctrine, commanding Souls to have, and Threatning for Want of the special Grace of Faith and Holiness, be the Way to produce it? Or, Whether it is not more naturally produced, by the pure Streams of Gospel Grace, flowing through the Blood of *Christ*, by the Power of the Spirit of Life, freely to the Soul? I therefore ask, Where is the Benefit of preaching saving Faith as a moral Duty, to unregenerate Souls, who cannot possibly perform it? Where is the Usefulness of preaching it to the Regenerate, where God by sovereign Grace has wrought it already? And where is the Advantage of laying this Task upon Souls weary and heavy laden, thirsting for Grace, and crying out, *Lord--- Help thou mine Unbelief?*

THIRDLY, To Experienced BELIEVERS.

HOW does a *Duty Faith* answer, to your past, and present Experience? Can you declare, That this is the Thing, whereby you were delivered from the Power of Darkness, and translated into the Light of the Kingdom

of God? Or, can you declare, That *moral Duty* is the very Thing, whereby you draw Water out of the Wells of Salvation: That it is the Stamp, whereby you bear the Image of the Son of God: That it is the moving Engine, whereby you walk with God, and glorify your heavenly Father?

I. WHEN you first received the Blessing of Faith in the Son of God; was it wrought in your Souls by a commanding Law, laying it upon you as an Obligation, urging it as a Duty, pressing and exhorting you thereto, and admonishing you to perform it, or neglect it at your Peril? Or, Was it by the Glad Tidings of the Gospel of the Grace of God; opening to you the Bowels of the Love of *Jesus*, the Preciousness of his Blood, the unsearchable Riches of his Grace, his perfect Righteousness, his plenteous Redemption, his prevailing Intercession, and the free Streams of Life and Salvation that proceed from his immense Fulness? For perswaded I am, Whosoever is blessed with a lively Faith in *Christ Jesus*, and enabled to believe to the saving of the Soul; can tell, by what Means this was wrought. I do not say, every one can point out the Day it was begun; or tell, That it was by reading such a particular Portion of Scripture, or hearing such a Sermon, by such a Conference, or such a particular Meditation, &c. But every one that is brought out of Darkness, to behold the Glory of the Salvation of God, must know by what Light his Eyes were opened. Whether it was by a Discovery of those Things which God requires in his Law; or by a spiritual Manifestation of those Things which he freely gives, in the Gospel of *Christ*. I do not mean, whether your

your Consciences were awakened, and your Eyes opened to see your Bondage and Misery, by the Law: Which may be where there is no spiritual Life: Though if a Person have a just Sense of his lost Condition; it is not by being told, That the Law requires Faith and spiritual Grace from him, which would convey a false Idea; but by understanding the real Obligation he is under to God, the Justness of the Demands of the Law, and how far he has swerved from the perfect Rule: But my Enquiry is, by what Means ye new born Babes of the Kingdom, were brought into the Liberty of the Sons of God?

II. When you first enjoyed the Work of Faith with Power, and did believe spiritually in *Christ*; was it performed by your Activity, as an Act, or Work done by yourselves; or was it by a Communication of spiritual Life unto, a divine Operation upon, and an effectual Display Grace in your Souls? For your Understandings must be enlightened to behold, your Affections melted and attracted to desire, and your Hearts strengthened to embrace and trust in *Christ Jesus*; to cleave to him as your Life, Portion, Salvation, and everlasting Righteousness; to enjoy Peace in your Consciences through his precious Blood, and Comfort in your Souls through his Intercession: Your Souls must receive a Principle of true Holiness, be wrought into sincere Repentance from Sin, and made to delight in the Law of God; with a chearful Readiness to deny yourselves, to take up your Cross for *Christ's* Sake, and to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. Now, were you blessed with these Things, and your Hearts wrought into this Position, by the Works of

the Law; or was it by the Flowings of the Love of God, overcoming all Enmity and Unbelief in your Souls, and ravishing your Hearts, into a sweet Surrender of all your Powers, into the Bosom of *Christ*, and to the Will of God?

III. WHEN under any Tryals and Temptations; do you find your Faith increased, your Hearts enlarged, and your Souls comforted by your Acts and Performances, or by the special In-flowings of Grace from *Christ*, communicated by the great Comforter? When you have been under the Siftings of *Satan*; has your Faith been preserved from failing, by your own Duties, Performances, and Compliance with legal Requirements; or thro' a View of *Christ* in his Intercession, praying for you that your Faith fail not? When under the Buffetings of *Satan*, pierced with Thorns in your Flesh, to the wounding of your Souls; do you find your Hearts sustained, and the Power of *Christ* rest upon you, by hearing of the Obligations to believe, and the Duty of trusting in God, the Sin of Unbelief, and the dreadful End that awaits it; or by the gracious Word of *Christ*; *My Grace is sufficient for thee; for my Strength is made perfect in Weakness*? When you find Declensions and Witherings in your Souls; as in a dry and thirsty Land where no Water is; do you find Quickenings and Revivings, by Duties and Works of yours; or by special Enlargements, and Communications of Grace, streaming into your Hearts, from the Father, through *Christ*, by the Holy Ghost? When you seek *Jesus* your Beloved, and find him not, crying out in your Souls, *O! that I knew where I might find him!*---*I am weary of my Crying, my Throat is dried;*

dried; mine Eyes fail while I wait for my God. Is it by the Duty of Faith, or by the Spirit of Faith, that you receive the Light of his Countenance, or find him whom your Souls love? When your Minds are beset with Carnality, Lukewarmness, and Backwardness in the Ways of God; do you find yourselves driven into a spiritual Frame, by Commands and Threatnings, and Exhortations to act Faith; or drawn by Cords of Love, thro' the vivifying Influence of the Love of God, to delight in the Paths of Holiness? I do not ask, Whether you frequently find the Blessing, in the Use of Means: For all Means, and Ordinances of *Christ*, are of God's Appointment; and are very conducive to the End; and as it is our great Priviledge to enjoy them, it is our indispensable Duty diligently to attend them: And it is *Christ's* usual Way to afford his Presence, and manifest his Grace, while the Soul is waiting on him in the appointed Means; as the Believer knows, both from the Word of Truth, and by his own Experience. But the Question does not respect the Use of Means, in humble Waiting upon God for the Blessing; but the Blessing itself; whether it be obtained by the Work of the Creature, or proceed from the Grace of God alone? Or, whether you have found the better Accompt, in endeavouring by way of Duty, to work the Grace in your own Hearts; or in spreading your Case before the Lord, casting yourselves at his Feet, and waiting for his Salvation, 'till he shall be pleased to work it in you?

IV. In your Enlargements of Soul, exalted Conceptions of *Christ*, Flowings of Love, and unspeakable Rejoicings in *Jesus* the Lord; Do
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you apprehend no Fulness of Excellency in your Beloved, more than was in the first *Adam*? In your Marriage Relation, and indissolvable Union with *Christ*; whereby you claim the Property of Sons of God, and joint Heirs with *Christ*; and possess the Dignity of Kings and Priests, to God and his Father; Do you conceive no Advantage, more than a bare Restoration of the Patrimony, which you lost in your Father *Adam*? In the Riches of him in whom all Fulness dwells; the Honour of him whom all the Angels of God adore, to whom every Knee in Heaven and Earth must bow; the Delights of him whose Presence is full of Joy, and that Joy is full of Glory, with unspeakable Pleasures for evermore; the beautifying Qualities received by Reflection from him, who is the Image of the invisible God, and the Brightness of his Glory; the Cloathing you wear, which is his perfect Righteousness; the Food you live upon, which is his Flesh and Blood; the Residence where you dwell with him, which is in God the Father's Bosom; and the Solace you enjoy, through Fellowship with the Father and the Son: I say, Do you apprehend no Excellency in these Things, superior to what you were possessed of in your Creation, had a Right unto in your State of Innocence, or might have secured by Obedience? And when *Christ* shall be revealed from Heaven in his Glory, and in his Father's Glory; when your Bodies shall be fashioned like his glorious Body, and your Souls enlarged to behold and enjoy him as he is; when you shall be instated in those Joys and Glories, of which it is said, *For since the Beginning of the World Men have not beard, nor perceived by the Ear, neither bath the*

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Eye seen, O God, besides thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him. I say, Do you hope for nothing more than what you might have obtained for yourselves, by keeping the Law? I am well assured, the innocent Man possessed Perfection of Happiness in Paradise, for the Enjoyments were commensurate to the utmost Enlargements of his Soul; and doubtless it was attended with such Purity, Serenity, and Satisfaction, as no fallen Creature while unregenerate can form a just Conception of. But I am putting the Case to those Souls, who experience the divine Life, and know what it is to be born again, and by Faith to see, and spiritually to enjoy the Kingdom of God. You whose Hearts have been filled with the Overflowings of the Love of God, in his Son Jesus Christ: You whose Souls have been expanded with Views of the Fulness of Immanuel, elevated with Ideas of his Glory, enlarged with Conceptions of his eternal Perfections, and transported with the Joys of the World to come: You whose Understandings have been enlightened, to know what is the Hope of his Calling, and what the Riches of the Glory of his Inheritance in the Saints.---And unto all Riches of the full Assurance of Understanding, to the Acknowledgement of the Mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ: Can you suppose a Possibility, that any Thing which Mankind enjoyed in Eden, or could have obtained by his Obedience, should satisfy those boundless Desires, which are raised in your Souls, through your expatiated Conceptions of the infinite Fulness of the Lord of Glory? And can you suppose a Possibility of being happy, in any Thing which is not adequate to those enlarged Desires? Then, what Satisfaction is it, to hear of

of a Holiness and Happiness, equal to that in the earthy Man, but which cannot possibly advance any higher?

FOURTHLY, To SINNERS, who are convinced of their Sin and Misery.

WHICH Way do you expect to obtain Peace in your Souls? Or, what Comfort do you find from the Preaching of a *Duty Faith*?

I. Do you expect to find Liberty in your Souls, from Wrath and Condemnation, and to enjoy a Sense of Peace and Pardon, thro' the Mediation, Suretiship, redeeming Blood, justifying Righteousness, prevailing Intercession, and saving Grace of *Christ* alone; or through *Christ* upon Condition, or in consequence of your performing the Duty of Believing? And if the latter, What Peace can you expect from such a Salvation, which must depend precarious on the Performance of a lapsed Worm? For however great the Salvation itself is; to you it must be as uncertain, as the Performance of the Condition on which it's Efficacy depends. As a Shield of Gold, tied on by a Thread of Tow; the Defence will be as precarious, as the Band that holds it is weak. But if the former, That you look for a free unconditional Salvation; Whether do you expect to come to the Enjoyment of it, by your own Act of Believing; or by the Communication of Light, Life, and Power from the Son of God? If by your own Work of Faith, it comes to the same Thing as a Condition; for if your Work be not done, the Salvation cannot be attained. But if you say, you do not expect to perform it

it independent of the Grace of God; Then, do you expect the Lord to perform it in you; or yourselves to perform it, thro' the Assistance of his Grace? If this last, it still rests upon the broken Reed of the sinful Creature, and whatever has the least Dependence upon an Arm of Flesh, is certain to miscarry. All Men by Nature are blinded in their Minds, alienated in their Affections, corrupted in their Wills, and their Hearts are Enmity against God; and the Improvement of any Grace, is contrary to the Disposition of their Souls, and utterly impossible to them, unless God is pleased to create in them a *new Heart*: And if he does that, the Work is his, and not theirs. And can you expect to be purified from the Plague, and Corruption of your Nature; by the Performance of that same rebellious Nature, in adhering, and coming to, receiving, and believing on *Christ*; or thro' the Blood of *Christ*, manifested and applied to your Consciences, by the efficacious Influence of the Holy Ghost, purifying your Hearts by Faith?

II. ARE you thoroughly convinced of your own Vileness, Misery, and helpless Condition? Then, whether do you find more Peace and Comfort, in hearing Faith urged as a Duty, and the Want of it aggravated as a damning Sin; that God has told you how to obtain this Faith, and therefore you are worthy to perish for your Unbelief; that your Not believing with a saving Faith, is the clearest and most accountable Cause of your Damnation, &c. or by hearing *Christ* preached in his All-sufficiency, as a Covenant Surety, and a crucified Redeemer; a merciful High Priest, and a compassionate Saviour; a righteous Advocate, and a powerful

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Intercessor; a Fountain of living Water, a Well of Salvation, a River of Peace; the Foundation, Author, and Finisher of Faith? I say, Which of these Doctrines is best adapted to your Case? For tho' a Person may believe the Report, or assent to the Truths of the Gospel, as they stand in the Letter; who still is righteous in his own Conceit, and never was truly touched with a Sense of Sin; yet, it is impossible in the Nature of Things, that any Soul should believe unto Salvation, till his Eyes are opened to see himself lost. And the Dispute is not about a practical Adherence, to the Word and Means of Grace; but about that Faith which is inseparable from Salvation. Therefore, You are the only Persons, upon whom a Faith-requiring-Law can possibly take Effect. But do you find it to have the desired Effect? When Faith is urged as a Duty, and pressed upon you with Threats of Damnation; do you find yourselves instructed, encouraged, and strengthened, or some way affected thereby, so as it gives you Hopes of obtaining the Blessing? Or, do not the gracious Words of the Anointed of God, rather give Life to your Hopes? *He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the Poor, he hath sent me to heal the Broken-hearted, to preach Deliverance to the Captives, and Recovering of Sight to the Blind, to set at Liberty them that are bruised?*

III. SOULS under deep Conviction, frequently turn themselves every Way, to find Relief: Sometimes a Glimp of Light, and sometimes groping in Darkneſs; sometimes a little serene Composure of Mind, and sometimes all in Confusion; sometimes a small Degree of Comfort, and sometimes Horror and Distress: So it is
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With many, before they are brought to a fixed Rest upon the Rock of Ages. Now, whether do you find your Bondage heavier, when you are working, striving, and wrestling with your own Hearts, to make yourselves believe; and labouring to raise a Fermentation of Love, Humility, Heavenly-mindedness, and Faith in your own Souls; to drive your Hearts into a Compunction for Sin, and to make yourselves trust in *Christ*, &c. or when your Souls are laid low in Self-Abasement before the Lord, deeply sensible of your own Weakness, and Insufficiency to do any Thing, but cry, *God be merciful to me a Sinner*; and so looking directly to *Jesus* alone, and waiting for his Salvation; quitting all manner of Expectation from your own Power, Performances, or Endeavours; and seeking to *Christ* as the alone Deliverer, the Alpha and Omega, the All in all? And if your Answer be (as I am certain it will, if it be genuine) That the more you look to yourselves, and strive with your own Hearts in this Case; the greater is your Distress; Then, where is the Advantage of preaching Faith in *Christ* as a Duty; either for producing the Operation, or comforting Souls under the Guilt of Sin?

IV. WHEN you find yourselves the most strengthened, to approach the Throne of Grace; and the greatest Liberty to cry to the Lord, and to pour out your Souls before him, in seeking for Mercy and Salvation; Do you then call upon the most High, only to lend you his helping Hand, that you may perform the Work in your own Hearts; or that he will work all the Work in you? Do you, when in the Agonies of your Souls, pray that you may do the Duty of Faith, and that God will please to

accept the Performance; or that he will be pleased to take a helpless Worm into his own Hand, save you in the Multitude of his Mercies, and take all the Glory to himself? And if the moral Duty of Faith, be quite out of the Question, in your nearest Approaches to God; what Advantage will it be to you, to be called upon, and driven to the Performance, when your Minds are encompassed with Sin, Guilt, and the Power of Darkeness?

C H A P. VI.

An earnest Address.

FIRST, To them that have obtained like precious Faith with us; and which have believed through Grace.

DEARLY beloved Brethren, in the Grace of God, in the Kingdom of *Christ*, and the Love of the Spirit: Whosoever you are, in whatever Place, or Station of Life, or under whatsoever Denomination you pass in the World; Grace unto you, and Peace be multiplied. If the Son have made you free, then are ye free indeed. And if you be passed from Death to Life, by the omnipotent Life-giving-Commandment of the Father, in the Son, by the Holy Ghost; then are you delivered from the Dominion of Sin, and prepared to keep *Christ's* new Commandments: Because you dwell in him, and he in you. *What Things soever the Law saith, it saith to them who are under the Law.* Therefore, the moral Commandments, which require Love to God, and to our Neighbour;

bour; are obligatory upon all the human Race: But the new Commandments of *Jesus*, To believe on the Name of the Son of God, and love one another as Members of *Christ*; were never given to any, but such as are created in *Christ Jesus unto good Works*. God did not give the moral Law to Mankind, until he had given him a moral Capacity to obey, as well as laid him under the strongest Obligations: Neither doth *Christ* give his spiritual Commandments to any Soul, until he has indued it with a spiritual Capacity, and bestowed such spiritual Blessings, as may be the strongest Motives to true Holiness.

THE *Jews* were favoured with the Scriptures of the Prophets, which foretold of *Christ*; and which they professed to believe as the Testimony of God: Therefore the moral Law, which requires Love to God, with all the Soul, Mind, and Strength; in consequence of their being blessed with the Light of the Holy Scriptures, made it their indispensable Duty to have received the Testimony of *John* the Baptist, to have believed the Gospel, the Word, and Works of *Christ*. But to believe with a fiducial Recumbence on the Lord *Jesus Christ*, as their Life and Salvation; is beyond the Latitude of any Creature, but them who are united in Spirit to the Son of God.

THE moral Law, written in *Adam's Heart*, was included in the two old Commandments, whereon hung all the Law and the Prophets: But the Law of the Spirit of Life in *Christ Jesus*, is more extensive; and causes the Soul to delight both in the old Commandments, as they are adapted to Mankind; and in the new Commandments, as they are peculiar to the

the Soul that is born of God. Which new Commandments are comprised in these two; *That WE should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ: And love one another as he gave US Commandment.* But these Commandments have no Relation to the *having*, or *obtaining* the Grace of Faith; but to the Practice of the Persons whom God has blessed with Faith, of his own Operation: Into whose Hearts God hath caused his Light to shine, where *Christ* dwells, and the Anointing abideth in them. To these Souls the new Commandment is Meat and Drink, and the old Commandment is a delightful Exercise. But there is a material Difference, between the old and new Commandments: For our Love to God, considered in the Relation of a Creator, and Sustainer; cannot possibly be so elevating, as it is in Consideration of his being our God, and Father in *Christ*: Nor can our Love to Men as fellow Creatures, be so ardent, as it may be to Christians, as Brethren in *Christ*. But tho' there is more immediate Pleasure in the spiritual Walk, as therein we enjoy more Nearness to God; yet, as the moral Commandment is the Will of our heavenly Father, it is the Believer's Delight to obey it; for his Will is resolved into the Will of God. And were it not for the Body of Death, or Carnal-mindedness, which still warreth in his Members; the Believer would never violate any of God's Commandments, or need Reproofs for his Negligence, or Admonitions to urge him forward in his Obedience; but would perpetually run the Way of God's Commandments, with an enlarged Heart: For there is a natural Propensity in the new Creature, to delight in whatsoever is the Will of God. But
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while we have the carnal Mind, the Law of Sin, continually warring in our Members, to captivate us to the Will of the Flesh; we perpetually stand in Need of Admonitions, to put us in Remembrance, to use all Diligence, and watch unto every Means of Grace; that we may be strong in the Lord, to fight the good Fight of Faith.

WHEREFORE, my beloved Brethren, since we are all chosen in the only-begotten Son of God; adopted in the Glory-Man *Christ Jesus*, who is the Delight of God, and Head of the Church; redeemed with the precious Blood of the Lamb; born again, of the Spirit of Holiness; have all Access by one Spirit, through *Christ*, unto the Father; are all following the same Captain of Salvation, and fighting against the same Adversaries; being Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with *Christ*, of the same Glory; Let us be united in the Faith of *Jesus*; believing on his Name, and loving one another. And inasmuch as the Glory of God and our own Consolation, is so much concerned in our practical Walking with God, in Faith and Love; Let us *press toward the Mark, for the Prize of the high Calling of God in Christ Jesus*. I need not be afraid of being mistaken, or my Words misconstrued as tending to Legality, by those who have been blessed and enriched, with the Streams of divine Grace. For they are better instructed, than to imagine they can perform any Thing, as a Condition of Salvation and eternal Life: And they are more seasoned with the Principles of Holiness, than to disregard the Holy Commandments of our Lord *Jesus Christ*. I know you can understand me, That every Command of God is conscientiously

entiously to be observed; every Ordinance of *Christ*, and every Means of Grace to be closely attended to, by the Believer; not to obtain Life, Acceptance, or Salvation thereby; but to shew our Gratitude, manifest a holy Principle, and to prove the Truth of the Love of God shed abroad, and the Law of God written in our Hearts; as well as to seek his Face, behold more of his Glory, receive more of *Christ's* Image, and shew forth his Praise.

THOSE who are Sons of God by Adoption, he hath commanded to believe on his only-begotten Son. Not to bless themselves with the Life of Faith, with which Gift the Father hath blessed them already; but in a practical Way, to exercise ourselves in those Things which relate to *Christ*, and his Kingdom; under the Influence of that divine Principle, which he hath wrought in us. Vital Faith, to believe into the Fulness of the Grace of *Christ*, is a heavenly Gift, never required of any Creature: The practical Believing of *Christ's* Disciples, becomes both their Duty and their Delight, thro' the Blessing of divine Grace bestowed on them. But that Believing which is required of all Hearers, by the moral Law (which our Author confounds without Distinction) is essentially different from either of the former. The Apostle says, *These Things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal Life, and that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God.* For it is the Will of God, That all who believe spiritually should believe practically: And this can never be turned into a Task, unless our Minds grow carnal; and if it appear so, during the Interval while the carnal Frame prevails,

it immediately becomes a Delight, so soon as a spiritual Frame is restored. But no carnal Person can understand the Nature of the new Commandments of *Jesus*: For their Enmity against God, and their Estrangedness to *Christ*, cannot admit them to have any Conception of the sweet loving Strains, in which he gives his Commands to the Children of his Love. They come from *Christ* as from the most affectionate Husband, who in all his Commands chiefly consults the Happiness of his Spouse; and are received by his Church as by the most loving Wife, who esteems it her ultimate Happiness, to honour, please, and enjoy her Husband. They are Commandments, because *Christ* is King, Head, and Husband of his Church: But they are not of the Nature of Tasks, Burdens, or Compulsives; but loving Invitations, sweet Counsels, comforting Encouragements, and faithful Instructions, to lead us to the Enjoyment of himself; where all the Air is Love and Grace. And the Believer embraces all the Commands of *Christ*, as so many delightful Rules, or Means in the Hand of his beloved Lord, whereby to arrive at the Desire of his Soul. Just as a Woman whose chief Delight is her Husband, and he appoints her to meet him at such a Place; it is equally her Delight to obey, as his to be obeyed; and in doing his Will, she obtains her own. So *Christ* rather rules in his Saints by his Love, than over them by his Commands: Yet, they delight to receive his Commands; for hereby they learn his Will, and have the Satisfaction to know, that their Obedience is acceptable to him. And as he never requires more than he gives Grace to perform; they esteem all his Commandments,

as so many faithful Promises of Grace, to enable them to perform his Will. Therefore, his Commandments are the Rejoicing of their Hearts: *For this is the Love of God, that we keep his Commandments: And his Commandments are not grievous.*

Now let us enquire into some Particulars, of the two great new Commandments, of our beloved Lord.

FIRST, To believe on the Name of the Son of God.

I. **I**T obliges us diligently to search into, cheerfully to receive, and with all our Hearts to embrace, all the Doctrines of the Gospel of *Christ*; or the Record which God has given of his Son. For he saith unto us, *Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me.* And it is a most necessary Article, for all the Saints to be exercised in; that they may be duly instructed, into the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. For after all the Noise that Legalists make, about practical Godliness; No Man ever believed, further than his Understanding was illuminated; nor loved *Christ*, further than he believed in him; or glorified God, further than he loved him. *That the Soul be without Knowledge, it is not good.* For this Cause, *Jesus* instructed his Disciples in the Mysteries of his Grace, That they might believe. The Apostle *John* wrote to the Believers, That they might believe: Or, that as they had received the true Faith of *Christ*; they might be established in all the particular Doctrines pertaining thereto. For this Cause, the Apostle *Paul* so earnestly laboured, That he might apprehend that, for which he was apprehended of *Christ Jesus*. And

to earnestly prayed for the *Colossians*, That they might be filled with the Knowledge of God's Will, in all Wisdom and spiritual Understanding. Christ thus reproved his Disciples, O Fools, and slow of Heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken. And the Author to the *Hebrews*, reproves them of being dull of hearing, deficient in Understanding the Oracles of God, and unskilful in the Word of Righteousness.

THIS is a practical Application of our Minds, to search the pure Word of God, with an actual Readiness to embrace all Things that relate to the Mystery of Godliness; and diligently digesting all the precious Doctrines of Christ, comparing spiritual Things with spiritual. That our Minds may be well cultivated, with the illuminating, enriching, confirming, and comforting Testimonies of the Father, concerning his Son Jesus Christ. For notwithstanding, the Son of God hath given us an Understanding, to know him that is true; the Improvement of this Understanding is a practical Work; and is the necessary and indispensable Duty of every Believer. And, through the Grace of the Holy Spirit, it is the Means, whereby the Soul is enabled to behold, as in a Glass, the Glory of the Lord. And thereby becomes more and more changed into the Image of Christ: Filled with Joy and Peace in believing: Secured against the Winds of false Doctrine: And strengthened in the Lord, to walk in his Ways, to his Glory.

AND this is the Thing, wherein I think our Author is reprovable; if I am to suppose him a Believer. For had his forty Years daily Search of the Holy Scriptures, been attended with a close Enquiry after the unsearchable Riches of

Christ; and to make himself and others see, *what is the Fellowship of the Mystery, which from the Beginning of the World, hath been hid in God, who created all Things by Jesus Christ*; it is my Judgment, he would not have confounded the Perfection of the earthy *Adam*, with the Fulness of the Lord from Heaven: The Life promised by the Law, with that which is exhibited in the Gospel: The Grace of God, with the Duty of Man: And the Faith of the Operation of God, with practical Believing, &c. For, then we obey the Commandment of God, *to believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ*; when we embrace the Gospel Revelation, in the Purity and Glory of it. When we ascribe all the Glory, from first to last, to the eternal Springs of Grace in God the Father; to the Grace Fulness, and mediatorial Performances of the Son; and to the divine Operations of the Holy Ghost. When we advance *Christ Jesus*, in all his Offices and Relations, Glories and Perfections; so as in every Branch of Salvation, Grace, and Glory; we magnify him as the Alpha and Omega. And when our Eyes are fixed on him alone, as the Object of our Love, the Object of our Praise, the Object of our Confidence, and the Object of our Hope: For every Thing to be done for us, every Thing to be done in us, and every Thing to be enjoyed by us, in Time, and to Eternity.

II. THIS cordial Commandment requires us to believe, *the Love that God bath to us*: And the Faithfulness of his Promises in *Christ*. *Let not your Heart be troubled: Ye believe in God; believe also in me.---For all the Promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the Glory of God by us.* Therefore, it is for the Glory of God,

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God, that we take him at his Word; that we accept and plead all his Promises for ourselves; taking hold on them with an appropriating Claim, without debating the Veracity of the Promiser. This is a holy Reverence in the Children of God; as he hath taught them to call him Father, and plead his Promises in the Spirit of Adoption. While others out of a pretended Modesty (but in Truth it is the Carnality of their Minds, being Aliens to God) affect to say, "It becomes us to be suspicious, and not to err on the presumptuous Hand: It is safest to be doubtful, and rather mistrust ourselves: This bewrays Humility, &c." It bewrays a Soul to be in a Spirit of Legality, cleaving to his Self-righteousness, and hovering about his own Self-sufficiency. And as much voluntary Humility as appears, in such a Strain of Talking; It is a full Demonstration of so much Pride, as that that Person was never brought to a full Submission to the Righteousness of God: And unless he be made more humble than ever he was yet, he never will enjoy the Spirit of Adoption. And very positive I am, There is not a Soul under Heaven, who walks in the true Liberty of the Children of God; but he must be, and certainly is, much more blessed with the Grace of Humility; than any Person in the World, that pretends to a Humility, whose real Source is the Spirit of Bondage. But the Spouse of *Christ* is betrothed for ever, and is permitted the nearest Intimacy with her Husband, and enjoys the strongest Assurance of his Love: And may freely embrace that Liberty, and Boldness in his Presence, which he delights to give unto her. For in the most endearing Manner he allures her to
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this Familiarity ; saying, *Let me see thy Countenance, let me hear thy Voice.* And it is contrary to the Nature of that Spirit that dwells in the Saints ; to be guilty of so much Ingratitude, to him whose Bounty has so far exceeded towards them ; as to creep and leer, and appear shy and timorous ; thereby to represent *Christ* as a morose and churlish, unkind or unfaithful Husband.

III. THE salutary Command of *Christ* requires us to put Confidence in the Providence of God, and his perpetual Care over us. He commands us, not to take anxious Thought : But to consider the Works of God, his all-disposing Hand of Providence over all Creatures, and his more peculiar Regard to his own Children : And when *Jesus* saw his Disciples distressed, and perplexed with Anxiety, concerning Wants or Dangers ; he frequently gave them this gentle Reproof, *O ye of little Faith.* And that our Hearts may be established, with strong Confidence in the providential Goodness of God ; he has not only recorded his tender Care, over the former Generations of his People, and given us many Opportunities to remark his kind Dispensations, to ourselves ; but he has also given us his faithful Promise, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* And has given us such strong Demonstrations of his superlative Love in *Christ Jesus* ; that from thence the Apostle draws this cogent Argument, in favour of his universal Goodness to his Elect. *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all Things ?*

IV. By the loving Command of *Christ*, we are called to believe, That God hears our Prayers,

Prayers, and will grant our Request. As when the Disciples observed the Fig-tree, which *Jesus* cursed, and it was withered away; he said unto them, *Have Faith in God.* Wherein it is plain, he did not command them to be possessed with the Grace of Faith; for that they were already: But to observe the Power of God, and settle it in their Hearts, That God is always ready to hear the Supplications of his Son, and all his Elect through him. Therefore he says, *What Things soever ye desire when ye pray, Believe that ye receive them, and ye shall receive them.* And to enable us to fulfil this gracious Commandment, he has assured us, *Whatsoever ye shall ask in my Name, that will I do.*---*Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you.* And for our Satisfaction, these strong Reasons are given: *The Father himself loveth you. Christ also maketh Intercession for us. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our Infirmities.*----*And this is the Confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any Thing according to his Will, he heareth us. And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the Petitions that we desired of him.*

V. THIS most reasonable and delightful Command of *Christ*, obliges us to confess his Name, before all Men. As the Son of God himself, for our Sakes, before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good Confession.---*God is not ashamed to be called our God. And Jesus is not ashamed to call us Brethren.* Therefore we are commanded, Not to be ashamed of the Testimony of our Lord.--*For ye are bought with a Price: Therefore glorify God in your Body, and in your Spirit, which are God's.*---*That the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to*
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the Grace of our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ. But without making a publick Profession of *Christ*, we cannot glorify him: For if a Man should walk ever so soberly in his own Person, ever so honestly in his Station of Life, and ever so religiously in the Sight of Men; unless he freely acknowledges with his Mouth, the Truth as it is in *Jesus*; and confirm this Confession, by following *Christ* in the Worship of his own Appointment; he brings no Glory at all to the Son of God. For while this is wanting, who can tell what is the Motive, by which he is influenced to this Conduct? It may be judged to proceed from Heathen Principles, legal Terrors, or selfish Designs, &c. as well as for the Sake of *Christ*; unless the Person does acknowledge *Christ* to be his Salvation, the Foundation of his Hope, the Object of his Delight, and therefore his Law-giver, and his Example. Therefore it is the indispensable Duty of every Believer, to make an open Profession of the Lord *Jesus*; and as it is indisputably a great Priviledge; it is certain to be the Practice of every lively Believer; though I dare not say, That no Soul can be found in the Neglect of it, who has received Life from *Christ*; but I dare say, No Soul can live in the deliberate Neglect of it, who is blessed with *Life abundantly.* For *with the Heart Man believeth unto Righteousness, and with the Mouth Confession is made unto Salvation.---Whosoever therefore shall confess me before Men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in Heaven.---Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.* And this is the Accusation laid against those among the chief Rulers; Many be-
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lieved on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him. For notwithstanding they had a suasive Belief; being convinced in their Consciences that he was the *Christ*; They had not the Life of Faith, to believe spiritually in *Jesus*; and therefore his sweet Command (which his Children delight in) had no Influence upon them. For though an unregenerate Soul may hypocritically call him, Lord, Lord; yet, as they cannot (in Truth) confess him to be their Hope and Salvation; neither do they take Delight to glorify him, so far as they do understand, or might confess him: And this is their Sin. But those of the *Holy Nation*, delight to shew forth the Praises of him who hath called them out of *Darkness* into his marvellous *Light*.

VI. THIS beneficent Command of our gracious Lord, appointeth us to give constant Attendance, to all the Ordinances of his Gospel Worship. Go ye therefore and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all Things whatsoever I have commanded you.---Take, eat; this is my Body, which is broken for you: This do in Remembrance of me.---Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ---Then they that gladly received his Word were baptized---And they continued stedfastly in the Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayers.---I praise you, Brethren, that you---keep the Ordinances, as I delivered them to you.---Give Attendance to reading---Meditate upon these Things.---Pray without ceasing. In every Thing give Thanks: For this is the Will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.---Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together---but exhorting one another.---Let

the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all Wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms, and Hymns, and spiritual Songs, singing with Grace in your Hearts to the Lord. These are the Gates where the Saints wait, to behold the Beauty of the Lord. While the King is held in the Galleries. Which makes his Ordinances delightful Enjoyments, and not Services: As the World commonly calls them. In the strictest Sense, it is impossible for any created Being, to serve God. But in an improper Sense, we serve God when we serve his Church; by endeavouring to spread the Light of the Gospel, instructing the Ignorant, encouraging the weak, comforting the feeble-minded, admonishing those that err, and contending for the Faith of the Gospel, or in any Thing wherein we can exert ourselves, towards the Conversion of Sinners, the edifying of the Church of God, keeping the Unity of the Spirit in the Body of Christ, or in any wise helping the Distresses of the Saints, &c. And in some Respect, a close Waiting upon God in his publick Ordinances, has a Tendency to promote the Cause of our Lord Jesus: As it is a Ratification of what we have confessed with our Mouths: And while we make it manifest, by our constant waiting upon Christ in his own appointed Ways, That we find a real Sweetness in his Love, and Substance in his Salvation; it may give Countenance and Encouragement to others. But with respect to ourselves, the Ordinances of divine Worship are not Services in any Sense, unless it be, as a Person going to wait for, or receive a Favour, may be said to be serving himself. They are holy Feastings, and spiritual Banquetings with the King of Glory: Where the Spouse of
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Christ enjoys a delightful Repast, with him whom her Soul loveth. But this is what no Unbeliever can enjoy : For those Branches of Worship, which are peculiar to the Gospel Oeconomy, are appointed for the Use of Believers alone : And an Unbeliever cannot possibly enjoy any spiritual Benefit by them : Neither can he touch them, without a Profanation of that sacred Name, by whom they were appointed. For if an unregenerate Man would perform them, with a View to please God ; *without Faith it is impossible to please him.* And while a Man does these Things, merely as Duties and Services, he is only performing an imaginary Obedience, which no Law did ever require, or can accept from his Hands. And those Parts of Worship which are common to Mankind ; while they are performed under the Spirit of Bondage, and attended as a Task ; can neither bring Glory to God, nor Consolation to the Soul ; for they only bring forth Fruit unto Death. And where this is the Case, the Soul is a Stranger to the vivifying Influence, that attends the new Commandments of the *Messiah*.

VII. THE consolatory Commandment of *Christ*, enjoins us to embrace the Promise of his second Coming, *I go to prepare a Place for you. And if I go and prepare a Place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.*—*Let your Loins be girded about, and your Lights burning ; and ye yourselves like unto Men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the Wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open to him immediately.*—*Be ye therefore ready also.* We ought to acquaint ourselves with the Promises, of the Coming of our Lord ; that the Truth and Cer-

tainty thereof, may be made familiar, and fixed deep in our Minds: Which will yield solid Peace, Joy, and Satisfaction in waiting for him. This produces Patience and Comfort, under the heaviest Afflictions; when the Words of our Lord come like a reviving Cordial into our Souls: *Then look up, and lift up your Heads; for your Redemption draweth nigh.* It gives fresh Courage and Resolution, to deny ourselves, to take up our Cross, and to follow *Christ*; for the Joy that is set before us. It raises a holy Emulation in our Souls, to be like the Saints above; that we may enjoy the Presence of our Husband, that his Image may shine in us, and that his Praise and Glory may be manifested by us: And stirs us up to Diligence, that we may be in actual Readiness to meet our Beloved, when he shall return in Glory and Triumph; *like to a Roe, or to a young Hart upon the Mountains of Spices.---And his Feet shall stand in that Day upon the Mount of Olives.* But the World says, "The Thoughts of his Coming is terrible." I know it is terrible to the Children of Wrath: Because *the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven, with his mighty Angels, in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.* But is this an Argument; That because the Coming of the King of Glory, is terrible to his Enemies; therefore, it must be terrible to his Queen, the Apple of his Eye; when he comes with all his glorious Train, to carry her in Triumph, to his royal Palace? Nay! It is contrary to the Nature of Things, That God's Children should be afraid of *Christ's* Coming. There is much more Danger of them growing impatient, at the Thoughts of his Delay. And while

while the World cannot bear up their Spirits, at the Thoughts of *Christ's* Appearing; the Saints find it difficult to contain the Joy which it raises in their Hearts.

SECONDLY, *That we love one another.*

THIS Commandment is incompatible with the Quality and Station, of all unregenerate Persons: For the Phrase, *Love one another*, implies a Fraternity, or Persons of like Condition: Therefore to a wicked Man, it could only enjoyn the Love of wicked Men, &c. But it is peculiar to the Followers of the Lamb: To whom it is quite natural and smooth. For we are all Brethren and Sisters; and it is natural for Persons to love those of their own Family: We all bear the Image of *Jesus* in our Souls; and consequently must resemble each other: And it is natural for every Creature, to love it's own Likeness: We are all Members of the Body of *Christ*, and Members in particular one of another: And there is a mutual Edification among all the Members, to the Increase of the Body: Which makes it natural for us to love one another. And the Love of the Saints, to one another, tends very much to their Honour and Safety, Pleasure and Profit.

THEREFORE my beloved Brethren, let us see that we love one another with a pure Heart fervently. Forasmuch as our Lord hath left this as a discriminating Mark of his Called Ones. *By this shall all Men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have Love one to another.* But it is not a common Love, that can distinguish us from the World, and manifest us to be the Disciples of the Son of God; but it must be that peculiar

peculiar Love in the Spirit, which himself hath taught us: *This is my Commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.---For ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.---For this is the Message that ye heard from the Beginning, that we should love one another.---And this Commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his Brother also.---And above all Things have fervent Charity among yourselves.* The Commands and Exhortations of this Kind are very numerous, very strong, and very distinct, in pointing out that Love, which is peculiar to the Spirit of Jesus, and which none but the Grace-born Soul can understand. Let us therefore shew our Obedience to our heavenly Father, our Love to our Husband, and our Loyalty to our Prince, in keeping his salutary Commandments. That it may be made manifest, that we are not Impostors; but of the genuine Seed, legitimate Children, born of God. Like the ancient Saints, who could say, *We know that we have passed from Death unto Life, because we love the Brethren.*

AND it is our Duty, not only to manifest our Love to the Saints, in a general Way; but to be careful and diligent, in shewing the Sincerity of our Love in Christ, to the Brethren of the Household of Faith, in every Particular. 1. Keeping close to their Assemblies. *Then they that feared the Lord, spake often one to another.---These all continued with one Accord in Prayer and Supplication.* 2. Instructing one another in Gospel Truths. *Whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the Way of God more perfectly.* 3. Encouraging each other in the Way of the Lord. *And many People shall go and say, Come ye, and let*

us go up to the Mountain of the Lord.---Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of Hosts: I will go also. 4. Comforting the mourning Souls. Comfort ye, comfort ye, my People, saith your God.---Wherefore, comfort one another with these Words. 5. Admonishing and exhorting one another. Ye also are full of Goodness, filled with all Knowledge, able also to admonish one another.---But exhort one another daily while it is called, To Day. 6. Faithfully reproving Sin in one another. Thou shalt not hate thy Brother in thine Heart: Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy Neighbour, and not suffer Sin upon him.---As an Ear-ring of Gold, and an Ornament of fine Gold, so is a wise Reprover upon an obedient Ear. 7. Carefully to avoid giving Offence to one another. It is impossible but that Offences will come: But woe unto him through whom they come. 8. Avoiding any Thing which might cause a weak Soul to stumble. Take heed that ye despise not one of these little Ones.---It is good neither to eat Flesh, nor to drink Wine, nor any Thing whereby thy Brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. 9. Being ready to forgive Injuries. If thy Brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven Times in a Day, and seven Times in a Day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.---So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your Hearts forgive not every one his Brother their Trespases. 10. Kindly accepting Reproof from one another. Let the Righteous smite me, it shall be a Kindness; and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent Oil, which shall not break my Head: For yet my Prayer shall be in their Calamities. 11. Using all Means to make and keep Peace among

mong our Brethren. *Blessed are the Peace-makers. --- And the Fruit of Righteousness is sown in Peace of them that make Peace.* 12. Exerting ourselves to serve our Brethren, in whatever is in our Power; relieving their Necessities, preventing Distresses, vindicating their Characters against false Accusers, &c. *Hereby perceive we the Love of God, because he laid down his Life for us: And we ought to lay down our Lives for the Brethren.* 13. In a special Manner making them Sharers in our Addresses, and Petitions before the Throne of Grace. *Praying always with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all Perseverance, and Supplication for all Saints.* In these, and such like Things, consisteth that salutary Law of LOVE, given to us by the King of Zion. *A new Commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another.* And on which depends much of the present Comfort and Satisfaction of the Saints. *Behold, how good and how pleasant it is, for Brethren to dwell together in Unity.*

These are the two great Commandments of the New Testament. And they answer to the two old Commandments, respecting the Form of them: But they specifically differ, respecting the Matter: Both in regard to the Subjects and the Objects. The Old, are obligatory upon Men, as reasonable Creatures; binding them to Love God; as a sovereign Being; and Mankind, as fellow Creatures. The New, are obligatory upon Believers, as Subjects of *Christ's* Kingdom; binding them to Love God, as a Father, in *Christ*; and their Brethren, as fellow Heirs of the same Kingdom. For to *believe* in God, or to *believe* in *Christ* (in a practical Sense) is the same Thing as to *love* him. And herein again,

is a wide Difference: The moral Law requires from Mankind, those Things to which he has no Propensity: Which makes it a Task, a Yoke of Bondage. But the sweet Commandments of the Bridegroom of the Church, require his Spouse to follow him, in those Ways wherein his Grace inspires her to take Delight: And at the same Time strengthens her to walk, to run, and to mount up as on Eagle's Wings: Which makes it a *perfect Law of Liberty*.

SECONDLY, To the Preachers of the Gospel of Peace, who bring glad Tidings of good Things, who publish Salvation by Immanuel, and everlasting Life in the Holy One of Israel: Whom God hath made able Ministers of the New Testament; not of the Letter but of the Spirit: Who determine not to know any Thing among the People of God; save Jesus Christ and him crucified: Who are waiting to see the Lord appear in his Glory, to build up Zion: And rejoice, That the Lord alone shall be exalted; to the Staining of the Pride of the Glory of all Flesh. Grace and Peace be multiplied.

BELoved BRETHREN,

MANY and glorious are the Blessings, promised to the Church in the latter Days. *Many shall run to and fro, and Knowledge shall be increased.---Many shall be purified and made white and tried.---The Light of the Moon shall be as the Light of the Sun, and the Light of the Sun shall be seven fold, as the Light of seven Days. And the Church shall appear in her Beauty, As a Bride adorned for her Husband.---With Gladness*
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and Rejoicing shall they be brought: They shall enter into the King's Palace,---This is she that looketh forth as the Morning, fair as the Moon, clear as the Sun, and terrible as an Army with Banners. Therefore, let us take Courage and not be dismayed, though we are but as Worms; and our Names defamed, reproached, and cast out as evil; for the Sake of our glorious Lord, whose Name is as Ointment poured forth. Let us remember, All Flesh is Grass---but the Word of our God shall stand for ever. Let us, Not fear the Reproach of Men, neither be afraid of their Revilings. Let neither Menaces nor Flatteries induce us, to say, A Confederacy, to those People who cry, Peace, Peace; but the Terms of Peace with them must be, A giving Place to those Doctrines which gender to Bondage, or tend to lull poor Souls into a Lethargy; and yielding up, or at least, declining those resurgent Glories which shine in the everlasting Gospel. We know that Christ and his Gospel is a Stone of Stumbling, to them that stumble at the Word: But it is the Saviour of Life, to them that believe. Let us therefore, study to shew ourselves approved unto God, Workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth. In order whereunto, It is necessary that we justly distinguish, wherein our Work consisteth: What is, and what is not included, in our ministerial Commission: That we may not neglect the Work to which we are called: Nor interrupt it, by spending our Time in those Things, which bear no proper Relation to the Gospel, and which Christ has not given us in Commandment.

OUR Commission is, Preach the Gospel. The Gospel is the glad Tidings of the Kingdom of

of God: Or a pure Message of rich Grace, from the Father, by his Son *Jesus Christ*, to perishing Sinners. And to preach the Gospel, is to publish, proclaim, unfold, explain, declare, and distinctly to open, or make known this Grace. And here we must observe, our first Work is with Sinners, already lost: Sunk down into a State of Sin, Misery, and Damnation. Therefore, we are not sent to warn them of the Danger; but to point out the wretched Condition they are in already. Our Message is not to preach a Prevention of the Sinner's Destruction, but a Deliverance from it. Therefore, it must wholly relate to that which is absolutely perfect, infinite, eternal, immutable, and all-sufficient, to reach the utmost Depths of Ruin: For whatsoever falls short of this, is insignificant.

THEREFORE, in the *First Place*,

I. OUR Work is not to preach moral Duties, legal Requirements, and human Performances. For these cannot yield the Soul the least Relief; because those very Powers of Nature, whereby these Works should be performed, are already captivated, and involved in Sin, from whence they cannot recover themselves: So that the Performance of the Duty is rendered impossible. But suppose those Powers at full Liberty, to comply with all the Commands of God; yet, inasmuch as such Compliance is the bounden Duty of every Creature, every Day of his Life; it could not possibly pay any Arrears: And of Consequence, whatever Guilt, or Condemnation, is already contracted, must remain to Eternity. So that nothing short of sovereign Grace, can be of the least Avail to a miserable

Sinner. Therefore, To preach any Thing as the Matter of Salvation, or to encourage any Soul to hope for Relief, from any Thing; *save* Jesus Christ, *and him crucified*, is to deceive Souls, and dishonour God, by attempting to frustrate his Grace: *For if Righteousness come by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain.*

II. NEITHER is it our Business to preach a Conjunction, of the Righteousness of *Christ*, and the Righteousness of Man. For if our own Righteousness be perfect, there can be no Need of the Righteousness of another: And if *Christ's* Righteousness be perfect, there can be no Need of ours to be joined with it. Some Things may be perfect in Quality, but imperfect in Quantity, in which Case an Addition may be made to that Thing which is perfect; but not an Addition to the Perfection of it. For in what Sense soever any Thing is perfect, an Advance is impossible. And Righteousness is a Quality itself: Which if it be at all, it is Perfection: Wherever it has a Being, it admits no Imperfection, nor can receive Augmentation. Therefore, if both the Righteousness of *Christ*, and the Righteousness of Men, were perfect; they could not receive any Advantage from one another. And if the one was perfect, and the other imperfect, and those two joined together; they would both be imperfect: For Perfection ceases, by being mixed with Imperfection. And if both were imperfect, they would only make a double Imperfection: For wherever any Thing is short of Perfection, it is impossible to be perfected by the Addition of ten thousand Imperfections. *No Man putteth a Piece of new Cloth to an old Garment, lest the Rent be made worse.*

III. NEI-

III. NEITHER is it in our Commission to preach Works of Obedience, as Conditions of obtaining the Righteousness of *Christ*. For then the Righteousness of *Christ* is not a free Gift. And as a Creature once polluted with Sin, cannot do any Thing well pleasing to God, until his Soul be formed anew, it would only load him with an insupportable Burden: And so the Gospel would cease to be glad Tidings. But if it be said, "It is not perfect, but sincere Obedience that is required." Sincere Obedience supposes the Law of God written in the Heart: And then it is not the Condition, but the Fruit of the Grace of God. And if any Works of ours be required, as Conditions of Acceptance with God; then our Salvation depends on ourselves, and not on divine Grace: And so, it is not of Grace but of Works. And according to this, we must be born of the Will of the Flesh, or of the Will of Man; and not of God: Nor should we be justified by *Christ*, without the Works of the Law.

IV. NEITHER is it consistent with the Ministry of the New Testament, to admonish and exhort Persons to work spiritual Operations in themselves: As Faith, Repentance, Love, Holiness, &c. For these Blessings proceed alone from the Grace of God. And if we suggest that they are the Works of the Creature, by calling, and commanding Persons to the Performance; and with the next Breath declare, They are Gifts of Grace; we shall appear like a Trumpet that gives an uncertain Sound: As if the Word of *Christ* was, *Yea and Nay*. For though it is the Work of every Minister of the Gospel, to direct, invite, and encourage every broken hearted, heavy laden, mourning, thirsting

ing Soul; to look to the Riches of the Grace of *Christ*, for Life and Salvation: according to the Light, Strength, and earnest Desire, which he finds imprest upon his Soul: Yet, to command, exhort, and warn Persons to come to *Christ*, to believe in *Christ*, and to close with *Christ*; with such an Air as to insinuate, that it is a Performance required of them, or a Condition of their Acceptance with God; and so to inforce it with the Dangers, and dreadful Consequences in case of Neglect, &c. This is not to direct them to *Christ*, but to send them to themselves to seek a Saviour. And the very Words, Come to *Christ*, Receive *Christ*, Embrace *Christ*, Believe in *Christ*, Close with *Christ*, Make *Christ* welcome, Get an Interest in *Christ*, &c. when spoken in that Light, are a meer Jargon of senseless Words; and in effect, are as much as to say, Go from *Christ* to yourselves, Trust not in *Christ* but in yourselves, Seek not to *Christ* but to your own Hearts, to perform the Work in you. Such Exhortations may buoy up a haughty Soul, full of himself; who never knew what it was to be under the Searchings, of the penetrating Word of God, which is like unto Fire, or a Hammer that breaketh the Rock in Pieces: But has his carnal Life yet whole in him. It may stimulate his Pride, to imagine he can, and will, and does perform these Things for himself: And when he has fermented his Mind into some passionate Agitations, he thinks the Work is done. But they never can be of any Use to a trembling contrite Heart, who is crying out, *The Earth with her Bars is about me! Woe is me I am undone! God be merciful to me a Sinner! The only Effect* such Preaching can have upon these Souls,

Souls, is to fill them with deeper Horror and Distress: To wound, distract, and drive them to Desperation: As many a poor Soul hath felt, and has had reason to say of such Preachers, *Miserable Comforters are ye all!* For no greater Impossibility can be attempted under Heaven, than to believe in *Christ* for Life and Salvation, before Faith be wrought by the Holy Spirit: Or to come to *Jesus*, except we be drawn by the Father.

V. NOR is it included in our Commission, to exhort and admonish Sinners, or a promiscuous Audience, to the Performance of Duties; to caution and warn them against sinful Practices; and to teach and instruct them in the Regulation of their Lives, &c. Our Commission is not to preach the Law, but the Gospel. And were we to neglect our proper Work, and spend our Time in admonishing Sinners to reform their Lives, to mend their Ways, to practise Virtue and Religion, to regulate their Conversation, to tread in the Paths of Piety, to spend their Time in serving God, to imitate good People in all their godly Actions, &c. This would not have the least Tendency to convince, but to seduce them: By causing them to imagine their Salvation depended on a moral Reformation. For these Things may be done (in the Sense the World takes them) without a Spark of spiritual Grace. And when Persons hear them insisted on, as the main Branch of the Minister's Work: And when they comply with the Admonitions, and practise the Duties recommended to them (which is a very easy Thing, for a carnal Man to do) they naturally substitute them in the Room of the Salvation of God.

BUT

BUT our Work is to strike at the Root : To open the Purity and Perfection, Extent and Intent, Perpetuity and Severity of God's Holy Law : Exposing the Corruption of Nature, the Plague of the Heart, and the mortal Infection of Sin : With the Wrath, Curse, Vengeance, and Damnation due thereto : The ruined, miserable, helpless, and hopeless Condition of every Sinner : Also the Depravity and Imperfection, the Emptiness and Vanity, the Perverseness and Hypocrisy, that cleaves to all the natural Virtues, moral Actions, and religious Performances, that can proceed from a fallen Creature : And the Impossibility of Salvation to any Soul, any other Way than by the Son of God alone ; whose Righteousness is imputed by the Father, for Justification ; and whose vivifying Grace is applied by the Holy Spirit, in Regeneration. For any Thing short of this, is only scraping the outside of the Sepulchre, while the rotten Carcass is within. When *Ezekiel* was sent to the Dry Bones, he did not spend his Time in regulating, removing, and tumbling them about in the Valley : But prophesied as he was commanded, until the Spirit of God caused them to hear his Word. So the Apostles of *Christ*, when they preached to promiscuous Multitudes of dead Sinners, did not spend their Time in that which the World calls, *Practical Preaching* ; while the Persons were utter Strangers to that Power, which can excite to practical Walking. But they preached *Jesus*, the Salvation of God : And when it pleased the Lord the Spirit, to open the Hearts of those Sinners, to receive the Word ; then (and not before) they instructed them in the Practice of all Things, whatsoever *Christ* had commanded them.

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them. So every Gospel Minister ought to keep the Distinction perpetually in his Eye: To Sinners, he is to use all Means, to engage their Attention; and to preach Salvation to them, through *Jesus Christ*, and him crucified; waiting upon God to send a Blessing, to make the Word effectual: And where it has been made effectual to the Soul; he is to use all Means, for further Instruction and Edification.

In the Second Place.

OUR Work is, to preach the Kingdom of God: The Glory of the King, the Salvation of the Subject, and the Constitution of the Kingdom: The Situation, Enjoyments, and Glories of the Holy City: And so to describe the Breadth and Length, the Depth and Height, the Splendour and Power, of the Grace and Love of King *Jesus*; *That in all Things* he may have the Pre-eminence. And to make it appear, That his Name, is above every Name: That at the Name of *Jesus* every Knee should bow, of Things in Heaven, and Things in Earth, and Things under the Earth; And that every Tongue should confess, that *Jesus Christ* is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father. That by the Glory of his Majesty, All the lofty Looks of Man shall be humbled. And before him, every great Mountain shall become a Plain: And he shall bring forth the head Stone thereof with Shoutings, crying, Grace, Grace unto it. Or, our Work is, To preach the Doctrines of Grace: In all it's Flowings from God the Father, in his Preparations, Purposes, Performances, and Promises, for and to us, in and by his beloved Son: To preach the powerful Influence of this Grace, as the Believer shall experience it operating in his

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Soul

Soul, by the Energy and vivifying Communion of the Spirit of Grace. And to show the Effect of this Grace, in producing practical Conformity to the Will of God, and causing the Soul to delight in Righteousness and true Holiness, and to walk in such a Conversation as becometh the Gospel of Christ. All these Things are included in the Commission. *Teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* For, *To baptize in the Name,* must intend something more than a bare using of the Words, in the Administration: And can intend nothing less than, *by the Authority; and upon a Confession of Faith,* in the Divinity, Unity, Grace, and Salvation, of the Sacred Three; and *into the Hope,* of the Blessings of Grace, and eternal Life, from the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. But Souls cannot make a Profession, of that which is not made known to them; therefore, the Doctrine of the *Three, that bear Record in Heaven, which Three are One,* is constantly to be preached in the strongest Terms. For notwithstanding *Christ is All in All*, and to preach *Christ*, is to preach the whole Gospel of the Grace of God; It is not to exclude, but must necessarily include the Father and the Holy Ghost. *For in him dwelleth all the Fulness of the Godhead bodily.* None can know the Son, without knowing the Father that sent him; Nor can they know him as the *Christ*, the Anointed of God, without knowing the Holy Ghost, by whom he is anointed. Therefore, the Grace of *Christ*, is the Grace of the Three-One: To preach the Fulness of *Christ*, is to preach the Three-One: And to believe in *Jesus*, is to dwell in the Father, in the Word, and in the Holy Ghost.

I. WE

W^e are to preach the Grace of God the Father: Who is the only true God, The Lord of Heaven and Earth; The infinite *Jehovah*, The eternal I A.M. Who possesseth all Perfection in himself; absolutely independent of any other Being: Who filleth all Things; and his excellent Greatness is manifest in every Creature: Yet, the Light in which he dwells, no Man can approach: nor are the brightest Intelligences in the Creation, able to form a competent Conception of his transcendent Glory: Nor can any Creature attain to any Knowledge of his Will, but what he is pleased to reveal by his beloved Son. Concerning whom it is made known in his Word, That *the Father loveth the Son, and hath given all Things into his Hand*. He calls him, *Mine Elect in whom my Soul delighteth*. --- *My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*. And the Son saith, *I was daily his Delight, rejoicing always before him*. --- *For thou lovedst me before the Foundation of the World*. And to his only begotten, his first begotten, his first-born Son, Whom he hath appointed Heir of all Things; he hath given his Church: *My Father which gave them me, is greater than all*. --- *I have manifested thy Name unto the Men which thou gavest me out of the World: Thine they were, and thou gavest them me*. --- *I pray for them: I pray not for the World, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine*. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine. --- *Holy Father, keep through thine own Name, those whom thou hast given me*. --- *Those that thou gavest me I have kept*. --- *And this is the Father's Will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing*. And these being given to the Son of God, in the Relation of a Spouse: *The Bride, the Lamb*

Wife.---Members of his Body, of his Flesh, and of his Bones. The Father loveth them with the same Love, as he loveth his only Son. And hath loved them, as thou hast loved me. And embraceth them in the full Relation of Sons and Daughters. I---will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my Sons and Daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.---Having predestinated us unto the Adoption of Children by Jesus Christ to himself.--- And if Children, then Heirs; Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Christ. Thus Christ and his Church being one select Body: Perfect in the eternal Counsel of God the Father; he hath secured unto them a Kingdom of eternal Glory; That they may rest in the Enjoyment of God, and one another, for ever and ever. Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World.---It is your Father's good Pleasure to give you the Kingdom.--- We receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved.--- The God of all Grace who hath called us unto his eternal Glory by Christ Jesus.---Then shall the Righteous shine forth as the Sun, in the Kingdom of their Father. And for the compleating of this glorious Body, of which Immanuel is the Head; The Father hath prepared an infinite Treasury, in his Son, for the ample Supply of every Member. For it pleased the Father, that in him should all Fulness dwell.---And of his Fulness have all we received, and Grace for Grace.---According to his own Purpose and Grace which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the World began. And inasmuch as God foresaw the Ruin which we should bring upon ourselves by Sin; The Father appointed the only Son of his Love, to be the Mediator, laid the whole Charge upon him, and trusted our Salvation in his Hands. I have laid

laid Help upon one that is mighty.---Redeemed--- with the precious Blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without Blemish and without Spot: Who verily was fore ordained before the Foundation of the World.--- He shall save his People from their Sins.---That thou mayst be my Salvation unto the End of the Earth. For God has made a faithful Promise, That the Woman's Seed shall bruise the Serpent's Head. Thus all the Father's Love to his Elect, is through his Son: Wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved. All his Salvation is by Christ: He hath---raised up an Horn of Salvation for us. And all the Glory which he bestows upon his Church, shines in the Man Christ Jesus: Even he shall build the Temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the Glory.

II. WE are to preach the Grace of Christ Jesus our Lord. Who is the eternal living God: Of one Essence with the Father: Equal in all his Attributes, Counsels, and Works. Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever.---And his Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.---Who being in the Form of God, thought it not Robbery to be equal with God.---This is the true God, and eternal Life. Who is very Man, of the self-same human Nature. A Virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his Name, Immanuel.---The Man that is my Fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts.---The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us.---For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one.---That Holy Thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God. He is the Head of his Church: The Source of eternal Life to every Member: And our spiritual and eternal Life is as immediately dependent upon Christ, as the Life

Lifer of the Fetus in the Womb is upon the Mother. He is the Head of the Body, the Church. God hath given to us eternal Life. And this Life is in his Son. And he is the Saviour of his People: A compleat Deliverer from every Evil that is possible to arise, internal or external, respecting Time or Eternity. He is able also to save them to the uttermost. He is Alpha and Omega; in all the Writings of the Oracles of God. In the Volume of the Book it is written of me. All Things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me. Therefore, throughout the Whole of our Ministry Christ ought to be First and Last. In the Calling of Sinners: God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your Iniquities. In the Edification of the Church: That we may grow up into him in all Things, which is the Head, even Christ. In producing Holiness of Conversation: Looking unto Jesus. In the Consolation of the Saints: We also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. And in the Administration of all Ordinances: That he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with Water. As often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do shew the Lord's Death till he come. As also in the Union of the Church: By one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body. Now ye are the Body of Christ.

III. Our Business is to preach the Grace of the Holy Ghost. Who is the omnipotent Jehovah: Of one Essence with the Father and the Son: Equal in all the Attributes, Counsels, and Works of God. Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth

dwelleth in you? Now the Lord is that Spirit. In the Works of Nature, the Father is represented as the Author: God created. The Son as the Sustainer: In the Beginning. The Spirit as the Mediator: The Spirit of God moved. Again, God that made the World. Upholding all Things by the Word of his Power. By his Spirit he hath garnished the Heavens. Likewise in the Works of Grace. Every perfect Gift---cometh down from the Father of Lights.---Who hath blessed us with all spiritual Blessings in heavenly Places in Christ.----The Love of God is shed abroad in your Hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. Thus, the Love of God, appears in the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and proceeds to us by the Communion of the Holy Ghost. Therefore, we ought to have a constant Regard to the Spirit of Holiness, in every Branch of our Ministry. 1. As the Efficient in Regeneration: By whose Influence alone, the Heart is opened, the Word comes in Power, and the Soul receives Life from the Son of God. Begotten of God.---Quickened together with Christ.---Born of the Spirit. 2. As the Comforter, the Spirit of Adoption: By whom the Believer is sealed, anointed, or baptized. Which precious Promises of the Holy Ghost, cannot be confounded with Regeneration. For, *This he saith of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.* Nor can they be confounded with miraculous Gifts: Which were only Signs, and continued one Age and no longer. But the Promise of the Comforter is, *That he may abide with you for ever.*

May

MAY his rich Grace enable us, to make full Proof of our Ministry; in holding forth the faithful Word of Life: And grant his Blessing thereon, to the Calling of Sinners; and Edification of the Lambs of Christ: That though we go forth weeping, bearing precious Seed; we may return rejoicing, bringing Sheaves with us. And may the eternal Three-One receive all the Glory, for ever. Amen.

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